ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation:	MORAL TRANSFORMATION IN THEORY, PRACTICE, AND APPLICATION
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This three-paper dissertation explores challenges to moral transformation and moral development. The first two papers explore puzzles that challenge whether moral transformation is possible in the way it is usually conceived. In the first paper, I address the issue of whether it is possible to rationally choose to morally transform. Recently, Laurie Paul has argued that it is impossible to rationally choose to have what she calls a transformative experience. I argue that moral transformation is a species of transformative experience and also, against Paul, that it is possible to rationally choose to morally transform. In the second paper, I address a challenge to the process of moral development. According to Aristotle and others, one becomes virtuous by acting as the virtuous person acts. But how is this possible if one is not already virtuous? I argue that it is, but one must first practice habituating the practical attitudes (i.e. the beliefs and desire) of the virtuous person. In this way the self-controlled person and the weak-willed (or akratic) person can grow in virtue. Additionally, I provide practical exercises—types of spiritual disciplines and moral drills—to help learners shape their practical attitudes. In the final paper, I explore an instance where moral development is disrupted. More specifically I show how moral injury interrupts and causes dysfunction within one's character, making further transformation towards virtue impossible. I then identify strategies and tactics to inoculate people,

especially soldiers, from moral injury—what I call developing the virtue of moral resilience—thereby safeguarding their path to moral development.

MORAL TRANSFORMATION IN THEORY, PRACTICE, AND APPLICATION

by

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Introduction: Moral Transformation in Theory, Practice, and Application

Many years ago, as a young naval officer, I came to the realization that I was not nearly as good as I had thought. I was thrust into a job for which I was unprepared. I had some good habits and a number of bad ones and I wanted to become better. So, I searched for solutions in various books on leadership and character. What I found was a lot of literature describing character and describing leadership and some literature theorizing about how leadership and character work. However, there was a dearth of literature about how one actually learns to do the things these theorizers claimed were part of good character and leadership. Years later this problem became more acute as I entered into positions where I was expected to teach young professionals how to become good, or how to grow in virtue. Today, there remains a significant amount of theoretical discussion concerning virtue—and even on learning to be virtuous. However, explicit connections between virtue theory and the practice of becoming virtuous are less discussed. This dissertation is my attempt to fill in some of those connections.

I have two guiding principles that govern the body of this work. First, I am concerned with character formation that is chosen and not the kind that just happens based on life's many twists and turns. Of course, those twists and turns are relevant, but one's chosen responses to these events are the object of my concern. Thus, I'm assuming a view of a human person who has some voluntary power to determine her own course. Second, I consider the practical applicability and usefulness of a theoretical idea as important evidence for the truth of it. Particularly with a practical

concern, like virtue development, if one cannot make the theory work in practice, personal limitations aside, then the theory cannot be correctly describing what is really happening. Neither of these assumptions and principles are explicit in the following chapters, but the reasoning in each chapter is governed by them. I also trust these assumptions are general enough that regardless of my specific views, the theoretical and practical concerns I discuss will be largely transferrable.

Living (and teaching) a moral life is more than a theoretical exercise, and as such, a mere theoretical understanding without practical application will have little impact on what one can actually do. Aristotle observes that "most people do not [act in just and temperate ways], but take refuge in theory…behaving somewhat like patients who listen attentively to their doctors, but do none of the things they are ordered to do." (Aristotle *NE*, 1105b5-15). My aim is to provide solutions to problems in the practice of virtue and character development and I trust that the practical applicability and efficacy of my solutions lends support to their veracity.

A General Pattern of Change

Imagine a person expecting to play one of Beethoven's sonatas having heard it, studied the musical theory behind it, but never having practiced playing it. Or think of someone attempting to run a marathon after watching many, researching how the best marathoners train, but never having trained themselves. Merely thinking and reading about virtue will have a similar effect because the moral life is a life of practice. It is action. An excellent person is one who acts in accordance with virtue (*NE*, 1098a15-20). This excellent person, like an excellent athlete or a pianist, does not become excellent or good without practice. Practice is a problem, however. It is

a lot of hard work, and if hard work is to be freely chosen, one must see some good to come of it. She must see it as worthwhile. No one chooses to pursue excellence in anything unless she first sees that putting forth the effort to develop that excellence is a worthy endeavor—she requires a vision or a picture of how good her life would be if she were to acquire that excellence. This picture enables her to hold firm to an intention or a purposeful resolve to pursue such a life. Finally, she must arrange her life such that she will be able to take practical steps to pursue excellence and then she must actually implement them (Willard 2002, 83-4). In order to learn to play Beethoven, for instance, she must really see how that would benefit her life, or be good for her. So good, in fact, that it is worth sacrificing other things, like soccer and swimming, in order to pursue it. If she sees it as such, then she will be able to hold to a firm intention to do it. She is now left with rearranging her life (planning for it and prioritizing it over other things) so that she can purposefully implement the practical means to do it. Growing in virtue is no different.[1]

Roadblocks to Implementing change

So, to morally transform, say from a stingy to a generous person, one must see how such a transformation would benefit her life. Secondly, once she does see this, she needs to intentionally enter into practices that will help her to transform. Aristotle and others offer wisdom concerning how to become virtuous: emulate the excellent person.[2] Within this prescription is an unstated presumption that one will

[1]I am influenced by Willard's model for intentional change, VIM: vision, intention, means (of implementation). See his (2002, 85-91).

see that the excellent person is living a life worth living and pursuing—that this kind of life is attractive in some way. Additionally, within the explicit prescription is the assumption that the non-virtuous person is able to do the same things as a virtuous person. If one wants to become courageous, for example, she should do courageous things, the things that a courageous person does.

This picture of moral development gives rise to two questions or puzzles. First, how is it possible for a non-virtuous person to come to see virtue as attractive enough that she will choose it over other, perhaps apparent, goods? Presumably, a person needs to see that becoming courageous would be good for her and make her life better before she would be willing to emulate the courageous person. What sorts of experiences make one more likely to see virtue as desirable or as choice worthy such that she can form a vision of herself and her life with virtue(s) that will motivate her to pursue it? Thus, the first challenge of practice is for one to form a picture or vision of herself and her life that will motivate her to pursue virtue. Assuming one has come to see how pursuing a virtue, like courage, would benefit her and has formed an intention to pursue it, she must enter into various practices—e.g., do what courageous people do—in her pursuit of it. This, then, is the second puzzle: how can she become virtuous by practicing courage when she is not yet courageous? Taking courageous action is precisely what the cowardly person cannot do, but exactly what she needs to do in order to habituate courage. For most, it isn't a lack of effort or trying-hard that sets them back, it is that their whole self—up to forming this

[2]See for example: Annas (2011), Callard (2018), and Zagzebski (2017) who all present becoming virtuous as being accomplished through some form of emulation.

intention to pursue courage—has been trained and integrated to act cowardly. Thus, when she attempts to act on her intention to act courageously, her mind, body, and social relationships work against her intention. She can only produce the practical attitudes (thoughts, feelings, and desires) of a coward. The intention to pursue courage has no support. Thus, she is left with puzzling out how she is to overcome her habituated desires and emotions in order to practice acting virtuously when she is not able to act virtuously.

Moral Development: A Sketch

These two puzzles occur at natural points along what I consider a usual process of moral development which I sketch here. The aim of this process is to become a virtuous person who is characterized as both internally and externally rightly-ordered within herself and her various social relationships and environment. Her whole self is directed toward living a particular kind of life where her will is set upon the promotion of the various human goods with which she is in contact, including her own and those others within the range of her effective will (Willard 2018, 367). A non-virtuous, or perhaps vicious, person's will (intention) is not aimed at promoting these goods for one reason or another. And so, virtue development is the path from non-virtuous to virtuous. I've included a chart (Figure 1) as a quick reference to touchpoints along the path one takes from being non-virtuous to virtuous. The four items in the top row of the chart correspond with my interpretation of four stereotypical persons which Myles Burnyeat extracts from Aristotle (Burnyeat 1980). They roughly correspond to the stages through which one passes as she first, sets her intention to become virtuous, and then works to habituate her practical attitudes such

that she is more and more able to execute her intention. In the case of the virtue of temperance, for example, the four stages will be first, intemperance, then weak-willed action, strong-willed action, and finally temperate action. When someone is intemperate, she has yet to form the intention to act in a temperate manner. When she is temperate, she intends to act temperately and her practical attitudes (internal states) are habituated to support that intention. She intends to act temperately in the stages in

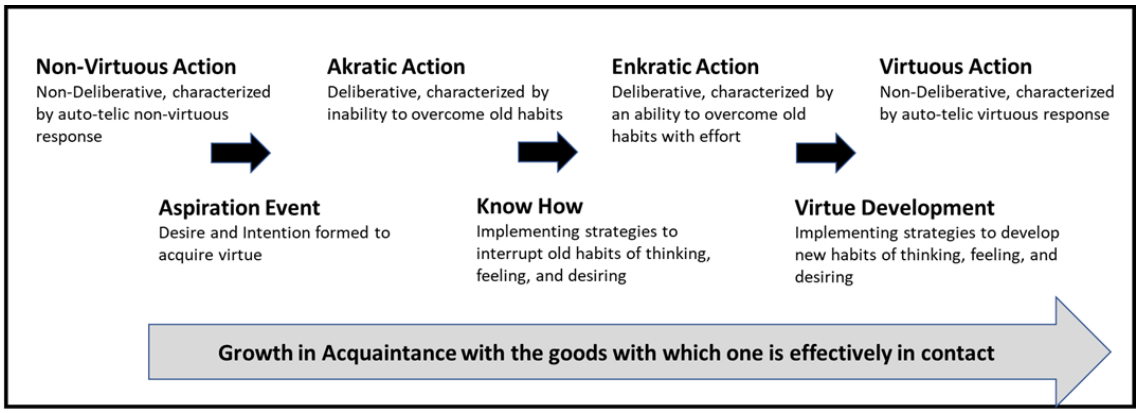

Figure 1: Stages of Moral Development with Respect to Knowledge

between, but must deliberately overcome her habituated practical attitudes to do so. Her actions are characterized as akratic when she is unable to act with respect to her intent or enkratic when she can successfully overcome these habits in order to act as she intends. Intemperate and temperate actions are non-deliberative in the sense that one, more-or-less, automatically acts from her set intention. The actions she takes are auto-telic; they flow from her habituated character as she acts to promote her intention. In other words, the intemperate or temperate person has habits shaped by her practical attitudes—beliefs, emotions, and desires—and her actions naturally proceed from these attitudes. These habits more or less govern her actions except in cases when she deliberately intervenes. Akratic (weak-willed) and enkratic (strong-

willed) action are deliberative in the sense that one must enter into deliberations in an attempt to disrupt how she would act absent such intervention.

The next row in the chart are those intentional interventions and interruptions of old habits and the intentional, strategic formation of new ones that correspond to major movements of, or growth in, practical knowledge. As I treat it, practical knowledge in the case of virtue is the knowledge of how to generate the practical attitudes out of which virtuous action flows. Consider an intemperate woman who readily accepts a third glass of champagne at a work party where only two glasses are appropriate (Goldie 2004, 70-75). She not only accepts this glass readily, she is not tempted to refuse it. It doesn't cross her mind. So, not only is her response non-deliberative, it automatically supports her settled intention to gratify her desires—it is auto-telic in this way. She is habituated to think, feel, and desire in particular ways—intemperate ways—and has a settled intent to so act. Thus, she is characterized by non-virtuous action (top left of the chart). So, to refuse the glass of champagne, she would need to interrupt her habituated practical attitudes by thoughtful and intentional interventions.[3]

To move along the path of moral development, one must move through the first item in the next row which is the "Aspirational Event." This event is the experience or group of experiences which provide the opportunity for one to form the intention to pursue virtue. It is during this event that one perceives the virtuous person as attractive and, out of this experience, she is able to see what her life might

[3]Social and situation disruptions can also interrupt settled intention, but unless purposely chosen, are accidental.

be like were she to become, for example, temperate. Such a vision is needed in order to form an intention to become virtuous. But how a non-virtuous person can come to perceive the virtuous person as attractive is the first puzzle. If one does not value temperance, for instance, how can she perceive a temperate person as attractive, or her act of temperance as having value? Thus, the challenge represented by the "Aspirational Event" is for one to come to perceive virtue as good and attractive. If she can do so, she will have formed an intention to pursue virtue. Here she encounters the second puzzle: to develop virtue, she needs to practice acting virtuously, but it is precisely here that she remains ignorant. She does not know how to interrupt her practical attitudes such that she can act on her intention. She finds herself characterized by akratic action, so when she is offered the third glass, she deliberates about whether she should take it, decides that she shouldn't, but accepts it regardless. So, she really intends to become virtuous, by acting temperately, while simultaneously remaining unable to interrupt effectively her previously habituated practical attitudes which lead her to take intemperate action.

To move beyond being characterized by akratic action to being characterized by enkratic, or self-controlled, action one must overcome the second practical puzzle. Here, in this stage of growth in practical knowledge, "Know How," one learns how to interrupt old habits of thinking, feeling, and desiring so that her old, habituated, practical attitudes fail to overcome her deliberate intention to refuse the third glass of champagne and so, act temperately. Now characterized as an enkratic, her actions remain deliberative. She is able to reliably take virtuous action by avoiding situations that would hinder such action, but she has yet to learn how to think, feel, and desire in

the manner of the virtuous person. To move along from characterization as enkratic to being characterized as virtuous, she must pass through "Virtue Development", the last stage of growth in practical knowledge where she learns strategies to form practical attitudes appropriate to virtue such that they become habituated. The aim is to eliminate the need to interrupt previously habituated practical attitudes and instead rely upon one's newly formed ones. Thus, one is finally able to develop the practical attitudes of the virtuous person such that she naturally acts out of them (auto-telically) with facility in order to act virtuously and promote the human goods within the range of her effective will.

The last item on the chart, the arrow at the bottom, is present to capture one's growth in experiential knowledge and perception of various human goods and virtues as she grows in her ability to generate and maintain those practical attitudes out of which come virtuous actions. A natural awareness and facility to attend to one's own good and the good of those around them are natural outcomes of developing virtues. The intemperate co-worker who is only able to attend to her own desires will, as she grows, come to see temperate action not only as a way of promoting her health, but also as a way of respecting her co-workers, and perhaps her profession. Thus, she might come to notice that virtue in the form of temperate action promotes the well-being of others as well as herself. I include the arrow to acknowledge that as one progresses down this path, she is better able to understand and recognize the destination and the goods that she is pursuing. The growing acquaintance with virtue reinforces her vision of life as a virtuous person and her intention to pursue it.

The Thread of Moral Transformation

The main concern in the effort to bring about moral transformation in oneself or to help others do so is to determine how to effect the kind of growth of practical knowledge captured in the second row of Figure 1. It is this growth that progresses one along the top row toward the action of the virtuous person. My first two chapters explore the puzzles introduced above as challenges to these steps. The first chapter addresses the puzzle of how a person comes to pursue a different value—how the coward becomes attracted to the virtue of courage and forms an intention to become courageous. The second chapter addresses the puzzle of how one who is not yet virtuous can act virtuously and so attain virtue. Assuming that one learns to be virtuous by acting virtuously, how can one who isn't able to resist chocolate cake, for instance, ever practice resisting the chocolate cake. It seems this practice is required to form the virtue of temperance, but the practice is the very thing akratic progressors cannot do. Similar challenges await the self-controlled progressor. My third chapter explores a different challenge to moral transformation—specifically moral injury. Moral injury interrupts and causes dysfunction within one's character, making further transformation toward virtue impossible and eventually causing, as one author puts it, the unraveling of character (Shay 1994). So, in chapter 3, I aim to identify the components of moral injury utilizing the lens of moral transformation and then offer strategies and tactics to inoculate people, especially soldiers, from moral injury—safeguarding the path of moral development. Thus, the common thread throughout these chapters is moral transformation in theory, practice, and application.

Transformative Experience and the Possibility of Rational Moral Transformation

The first chapter begins at the beginning of the moral transformation journey and specifically addresses the aspiration event noted in Figure 1. How does someone, who is already habituated in certain ways, come to desire to be virtuous? How does she come to see being virtuous as more choice-worthy than the pursuit of other goods? I approach this question by engaging primarily with Laurie Paul's work on transformative experience (2014). Paul argues that the decision to undergo what she calls transformative experiences are typically not made rationally. According to Paul, a transformative experience is one that changes a person both epistemically and personally: a person who undergoes a transformative experience both gains new knowledge that she could not have had without going through the experience and changes her values and how she generally sees herself in important ways. Paul's paradigm case of a transformative experience is becoming a parent: by becoming a parent, one learns something she could not have learned without actually becoming a parent (what it is like to be a parent) and her values change in substantial ways (she may go from highly valuing career success to thinking that coaching soccer is more meaningful).

Paul poses a challenge to the rationality of choosing to have a transformative experience. In order to make a rational choice, a person must, among other things, imagine the various outcomes of her actions and assign to each outcome a subjective value which reflects her ideas about how valuable each outcome would be to her. But Paul argues that in the case of transformative experiences one simply does not have the knowledge required to assign a subjective value to the relevant outcome, for she

does not know enough about what the experience will be like for her and so whether she would value it. For example, for someone to rationally choose whether to become a parent or remain childless she must (among other things) imagine a future scenario in which she is a parent and another in which she remains childless and assign to each a subjective value. But, according to Paul, someone who has not had a child simply does not know what it is like to have a child of her own and so she cannot know how much she would value that outcome. She may assign this outcome a value, but it will not be based on evidence. Thus she cannot rationally decide whether or not to have a child.

I argue that Paul's challenge to the rationality of transformative choice applies to the decision to develop a virtue as well, for developing a virtue is a transformative experience: the person who transforms from a coward to a courageous person, for example, attains both knowledge that she could not have had without becoming courageous (i.e., the knowledge of what it is like to value important goods over personal safety, to not be overwhelmed by fear, etc.), and has a change in values (i.e., she goes from valuing personal safety more highly than anything else, to being committed to promoting certain human goods, such as saving a life, more than her personal safety). Thus, if Paul is correct, then someone cannot rationally choose to develop virtue. But I do not think that such a choice is irrational. In fact, I think it is one of the better decisions that one can make. So I provide a response to Paul's challenge.

Drawing on Linda Zagzebski's work on admiration, I argue that the emotion of admiration for a virtuous exemplar can provide the basis for a rational decision to

transform. Zagzebski argues that the emotion of admiration can motivate a person to aspire to virtue (2017). When one admires a virtuous exemplar, that exemplar appears admirable to her and, in the right circumstances, that admiration can motivate her to emulate the exemplar. This emulation involves creating an ideal image of oneself as having the virtuous traits, and then enacting that image. I argue that this account can illustrate how someone might rationally decide to become virtuous. When someone admires an exemplar, she sees virtue as admirable and so choice-worthy and good for her to possess. Under the right circumstances, she uses her grasp of this virtue to create an ideal image of herself in which she possesses the virtue. This image enables her to assign a positive value to the outcome where she is virtuous and compare it to the outcome of remaining as she is. If she judges that being virtuous is better, then she will decide to become virtuous and take the actions that lead to virtue. My suggestion is that there is no need to deny that a decision made on this basis is rational, even though it is not based on knowing what it's like to be virtuous. It is rational because the emotion of admiration, under the right circumstances, can provide one with good evidence that a trait is valuable and good for her to possess, even if she does not know what it's like to possess that trait. Thus, admiration can both explain and justify the decision to become virtuous.

Getting to the Heart of Virtue: (Better) Advice for Growth in Moral Excellence

The second challenge of practice is how one practices virtuous action when she is not yet virtuous. Assuming she has resolved to become virtuous, what steps does she take to actually become so? Emulation and habituation are the traditional

answers—advocated by Aristotle and many following him: do as the virtuous person does (Aristotle *NE,* II.4 1105b6-12). This advice, which I refer to as the "standard advice", aligns *prima facie* with how most practical matters are learned. One finds an expert, observes how she does things, and attempts to replicate those actions in some context within one's own life. In the case of virtue, however, it is not enough to merely replicate the actions of a virtuous person—the moral expert; one must also replicate the right intention, desire, and feeling. As Aristotle says, "Actions, then, are called just and temperate when they are such as the just or temperate man would do; but it is not the man who does these things who is just or temperate, but the man who also does them as just and temperate men do them" (*NE* II.4, 1105b5-8). Moral progressors may be able to behave virtuously from time to time, but they are unable to practice virtue in the manner (i.e., with same practical attitudes, or internal states) as the virtuous person. Merely behaving virtuously without the associated, virtuous practical attitudes will not result in moral transformation toward virtue. Thus, how does one learn to act with the practical attitudes of the virtuous?

To illuminate this problem, I present an understanding of the virtuous person and the practical attitudes that she possesses. These practical attitudes enable her to (re)act virtuously in accordance with her wise purposes. Here, virtuous actions are the natural outflow of these practical attitudes. An experienced pianist, for example, will be thinking about what she wants to communicate to the audience and will not need to attend to the keys and her fingers as she does so. Likewise, the virtuous person will be promoting the goods within her effective will without attending to the particular practical attitudes that will manifest the courageous, just, or temperate

actions needed to promote such goods. Virtues, then, like other habits are as Julia Annas says, auto-telic—they automatically support the virtuous agent's ends (Annas 2011, 16).

However, the moral progressor has previously habituated practical attitudes that work against her virtuous ends. Thus, attempting to develop virtue in accordance with the standard advice is fraught with difficulty. First, those progressors who are akratic literally cannot refrain from, for example, eating a donut while on a diet. Second, those progressors who are enkratic (who can reproduce virtuous actions), still cannot perform virtuous actions as the virtuous person does them—i.e., in the same manner or with the same practical attitudes. Enkratic progressors can, for example, avoid eating the donut while on a diet. However, they will need to manipulate themselves somehow in order to refrain from eating the donut—e.g., promise themselves that they can have a mint after lunch or a beer after work. What moral progressors cannot do is to attend to the donut and refrain from eating it in the manner of the virtuous person—e.g., having the same practical attitudes like perceiving the donut as bad for her health, so as undesirable—and therefore avoiding it with ease.

I address the challenge by suggesting that the moral progressor should focus her efforts on acquiring through habituation virtuous beliefs, desires, and affections rather than focusing on performing virtuous action. These practical attitudes—beliefs, desires, and affections—underlie virtuous action. Merely performing the actions of a virtuous person absent her manner is deficient because, while it addresses the external behavior, it does not explicitly address the internal state of character. This internal state of affairs is what moves one to eat the donut despite being on a

diet. Thus, to learn to do as the virtuous does in the manner she does it, one needs to transform her practical attitudes. Virtuous actions will natural flow out of virtuous practical attitudes. Thus, the actions of the virtuous person should not be the primary focus of the learner's practice, but instead, she ought to focus on habituating the underlying beliefs, desires, and affections.

Because of the kind of thing that virtue is—an inner state of belief, feeling, and desire—the standard advice is deficient, or incomplete, advice for moral progressors. When one follows the standard advice only to modify one's actions—as it is usually understood—one simply develops a system of behavior management and neglects character transformation at the heart, or value, level. Thus, to begin to practice virtue in the manner of the virtuous, one must begin by habituating the practical attitudes of the virtuous. Then, once they are habituated, virtuous action will be the natural outcome. So, to conclude chapter 2, I provide old and new strategies that can be employed to transform values—for both in-forming new habits and re-forming old ones.

Moral Resilience: Inoculating Against Moral Injury

Many soldiers return home from war with invisible injuries. They've encountered grave injustices. Some have even perpetrated them. Unless these injustices are addressed, there is high likelihood that these soldiers have contracted what has become known as moral injury (Shay 1994). Moral injury can be caused by perpetrating, witnessing, or receiving a real or apparent moral injustice. Since war is filled with such experiences, soldiers are likely to encounter many potentially morally injurious events (PMIE) (Litz, et al. 2009). Symptoms displayed include shame,

guilt, and anger along with a loss of trust in one's own ability to enact moral good in the world and perhaps a loss of trust that the world itself has moral good in it. The emotional and existential pain associated with experiencing these injustices can lead, I believe, to moral dysfunction and perhaps even moral disfigurement (cf. Luban forthcoming). In short, they can unravel one's own character (Shay 1994).

In this chapter, utilizing my framework for character development, I provide a way that soldiers individually, and the military institution more broadly, can take steps to prevent moral injury from occurring. Soldiers can be inoculated from moral injury by developing the virtue, as I refer to it, of moral resilience. Moral resilience, I will argue, is a sub-virtue of justice—namely, the proper response to an injustice received, witnessed, or perpetrated. This moral virtue enables one to bounce-back from the injustices through an excellent, virtuous response. To elaborate on how one can form this virtue, I first analyze how moral injury disrupts the usual way in which one develops character. I argue that by perceiving oneself and the world in particular ways, a moral injured person will be unable to see themselves as someone who is good. The lack of this vision of oneself as (potentially) morally good can create a retrograde movement along the path of moral development resulting in the unraveling of one's character.

To halt this unraveling and restore the functionality of one's ability to morally transform, moral repair must be conducted. I primarily expand and elaborate on David Luban's model of atonement to discuss how injustices must be addressed by those morally injured (Luban forthcoming). I divide moral repair into two phases. In the first, a person must examine the experience that triggered the moral injury,

understand it properly, and come into moral agreement with one's broader moral community. Once the injured are clear on what occurred and what (if any) injustice needs to be addressed, they can enter into the second phase which may involve reparation and apology, forgiveness of self or others, vindication from one's community, etc. When complete, those who are morally injured should have responded to the injustice in an appropriate manner and in so doing, have gone some way to repairing the injury itself.

Because the process of moral repair goes some way to restore normal character growth—by addressing the moral dysfunction caused by injury—it offers insights into the kind of practical activities in which one can engage prior to encountering an injustice to prevent moral injury from occurring. These activities will strengthen her normal character function and ability to response to injustice. Thus, I argue that the activities inherent in moral repair are also the general activities that must be practiced to develop the virtue of moral resilience.

Lastly, armed with the knowledge of how moral resilience can be formed, I offer several suggestions that military institutions can utilize to create environments where individuals are able to develop it. First, the institution can elevate morally resilient mentors and provide opportunities to expose soldiers to them. Second, the military can develop training programs to expose soldiers and units of soldiers to some of the practical activities that develop moral resilience. Lastly, I argue that the military institution itself must hold up and practice justice as well as respond excellently to injustice. Institutional adherence to the aim of restoring or bringing about justice importantly informs the purpose and identity of its individual soldiers.

If the institution fails to uphold justice or fails to address injustices, it fails to create an environment where soldiers can development moral resilience and effectively inoculate themselves from moral injury.

Chapter 1: Transformative Experience and the Possibility of Rational Moral Transformation

One wants the decisions she makes to be the best decisions that she can make. Decision Theory calls these "best" decisions "rational" ones. A simple decision involves a choice among alternative courses of action. Each of these actions has a possible outcome or outcomes. To make a rational decision, someone assigns to each possible outcome a value (how much she would favor the outcome) and a probability (how likely she thinks it is for that outcome to occur should she make that choice); and she determines the overall expected value of an outcome by multiplying the value and the probability. According to Decision Theory, the rational choice is the action that results in the outcome or outcomes with the highest expected value.

In her book *Transformative Experience* Laurie Paul argues that for some of our most important choices in life it is impossible to make a decision rationally, for one does not possess the information required to accurately evaluate, or assign what Paul calls a 'subjective value' to, the relevant outcomes. These choices are those that result in what she calls a transformative experience. A transformative experience is one that significantly changes a person in an epistemic and personal way: it gives her new knowledge and changes her core values and how she sees herself in general (Paul 2014, 17). Examples of transformative experiences include having a child, falling in love, and religious conversion. Choosing to have an experience like this requires, for example, a non-parent to imagine a future scenario in which she is a parent and then assigning this outcome a subjective value. According to Paul, however, a non-parent

cannot accurately do this, since it requires knowing what it is like to be a parent, and one cannot know this without actually experiencing it.

I argue that moral, or character, transformation is a species of this kind of choice.[4] When a cowardly person, for example, becomes courageous, she is transformed both epistemically and personally: she gains the knowledge of what it is like to be courageous and her core values are changed. Following Paul, then, one can say that a cowardly person cannot rationally choose to be courageous, since she does not have the information required to imagine a scenario in which she is courageous and determine how valuable this would be for her. The same is true for generosity. Ebenezer Scrooge swore off miserliness and chose to become generous. One might explain (causally) his decision to become generous with his wealth and time by appealing to his experience with the three spirits of Christmas. But this experience did not show him what it is like to be generous. Thus, according to Paul, he would not have the information necessary to rationally choose to become generous rather than remain miserly.

If Paul's challenge to the rationality of choosing transformative experiences remains, therefore, then the project of moral, or character, transformation cannot be a rational project. I think Paul is mistaken and that projects of character transformation are rational projects. In part I, I do three things. First, I explain Paul's conception of a transformative experience and her challenge to the rationality of transformative choice. Second, I argue that becoming virtuous is a transformative experience, and so, if Paul is correct, one cannot rationally choose to become virtuous. Third, I argue

[4]I assume rational agents, so I do not consider early character formation in children.

that her solution the challenge is inadequate and fails to demonstrate the rationality of transformative choice. In part II, I turn to my own solution. I argue that the emotion of admiration can provide the basis for a rational choice to morally transform. This is because the emotion of admiration provides good evidence that something is admirable and so choice-worthy and good for someone to possess. Defending this claim requires explaining when the emotion of admiration can be trusted. Finally, I engage with Agnes Callard's recent work on transformation, or what she calls aspiration, and show how my account of admiration can fill some existing gaps in her account.

I. Transformative Experiences, Rational Choice, and Moral Transformation

Transformative Experiences and Rational Choice

Transformative experiences are experiences where a person enters the experience one way and leaves it another, epistemically and personally. According to Paul, an experience is *epistemically* transformative when a person gains knowledge from the experience that she could not have had without going through the experience. A mundane example is the experience of tasting something new like vegemite; one cannot know what it's like to taste vegemite without actually tasting it. A more profound example is the experience of falling in love; again, one cannot know what it's like to fall in love without actually having the experience. An experience is *personally* transformative when it changes a person in some deep and fundamental way, such as by changing her core values or the kind of person she takes herself to be. Examples of personally transformative experiences include the

traumatic experience of witnessing or participating in horrifically violent actions in war, receiving the news that one has a terminal illness, and religious conversion. A *transformative experience* is one that is both epistemically and personally transformative. An example of a transformative experience, according to Paul, is having a child. When a person has a child, she gains knowledge that she could not otherwise have had (i.e., the knowledge of what it is like to be a parent) and her core values and preferences are changed in fundamental ways (e.g., she might change from someone who highly values her career to someone who thinks coaching soccer is more meaningful).

It should be clear that some transformative experiences are unchosen, while some are chosen. But according to Paul, one cannot make the decision to undergo a transformative experience rationally—at least not in the way one usually thinks she does. A person cannot, for example, choose to have a child rationally (Paul 2014, 71ff). According to Paul, the rational way for a person to make this decision would be to imaginatively project herself into a future scenario where she has a child and then assign this outcome a subjective value, one which she can compare to the value of remaining childless. A subjective value reflects an individual's sense of what it will be like for her to experience the outcome and depends upon what she cares about, whatever that might be.[5] But in the case of having a child, a person's epistemic and imaginative capacities are limited. She simply does not know what it's like to have a child of her own and so cannot know how much she would value this outcome.

[5]Of course an action might also have a nonsubjective value, such as an objective moral value, and this could affect the overall expected value of the action. But Paul sets these sorts of values, and moral and legal considerations in general, to the side to focus on subjective values (2014, 25, 50, n.51).

Additionally, because transformative experiences are personally transformative, it is problematic for a person to use her current preferences to compare the relevant outcomes, for her preferences might radically change when she undergoes the experience. Someone cannot use her current preference to pursue career achievement, for example, to evaluate whether it makes sense to have a child and accept the limitations on her time this might involve, since her preference for career achievement might change when she has a child. Of course, someone does know what it is like to remain childless, but if rational choice involves evaluating and comparing a scenario where she has a child versus a scenario where she remains childless, then even the decision to remain childless cannot be done rationally, since she cannot compare the subjective values of the two outcomes to know which she prefers.

One response to Paul's challenge is that a person can rationally choose whether to undergo a transformative experience if she bases her evaluation of a certain outcome on the testimony of others (Paul 2014; 45-49; 65-70; 88-89). In the example where a person faces a decision whether to have children or remain childless, she can look at a plethora of data regarding whether people of a certain age and level of income regret having children, or she can look at the more anecdotal experience of her friends who have had children. From this information, she can assign a value—just not one grounded in her own experience—to the relevant outcomes and thus make a rational decision.

But Paul argues that utilizing testimony to evaluate an outcome gives rise to two problems. First, a person cannot be sure that her own experience will be similar

to that of the majority of people or to her friends. Thus, even if a person's friends report a greater sense of meaning in life once they have had children, she cannot be sure that she will also have this experience. Second, and more importantly, Paul argues that making a decision based largely on the testimony of others will not result in an *authentic* choice, for it is not based on one's own values and experiences (Paul 2014, 105-6). Imagine two young people entering into a marriage arranged by their parents.[6] In this scenario, each of them is substituting their parents' ideas about the value of their future experiences—no doubt based on the unique experience and judgement of the parents—for their own. This is problematic because the parents do not have the same experiences, purposes, goals, and dreams as their children, however closely they might be able to approximate them. Thus, when the child utilizes her parents' assessments of the future as her own, she isn't bringing the future that she imagines and values into reality, but instead the one her parents do. When one already has the knowledge needed to assign a subjective value for an outcome, then another's judgment can add weight—even enormous weight—to how one evaluates the action. But unless one is able to base her assessment of the future on her own experiences, she cannot authentically choose it.

So, there are two challenges for an agent choosing to undergo a transformative experience by rational choice. First, there is an epistemic problem. A person just doesn't have the requisite 'what it's like' knowledge of the relevant outcome (e.g., having a child) to know how good it will be for her and so assign it a subjective

[6]I don't mean to imply that there aren't some healthy, happy marriages that have been arranged—I know of some. I am arguing merely that the individuals were not the authors of the initial decision to marry.

value. Of course, someone can still assign the relevant outcome a value based on how much she believes she will value it. But, according to Paul, this evaluation would not be based on any evidence and so the decision would not count as rational. A person could assign a value to an outcome by utilizing an external, or third-person, evaluation, but then one faces the second challenge. Something fundamental is lost when the value assigned to an outcome is not assigned by the agent who is making the choice to undergo the experience. By utilizing third-person testimony or other collated data based on the experience of others, a person's decision is not authentic, since it does not flow from her own experiences and values. In sum, then, to make a rational and authentic choice for personal transformation, a person must be able to assign a subjective value to an outcome, say to have a child, based on her own experience. But, in order to do this, she must know what that experience is like. Thus, she cannot authentically make a rational decision to transform without first overcoming an epistemic bootstrapping problem (Paul, 2021, 482).

Moral transformation

Philosophers interested in the problem of transformative experience have identified several broad categories of transformative experience, such as falling in love, changing one's social identity, the trauma of war, and ideological conversion (Chan 2023). I argue that developing a virtue, such as courage, generosity, compassion, or patience, is also a species of transformative experience. As Agnes Callard notes, not all transformative experiences are the result of a single experience, but instead are the result of a longer process which one can intentionally choose to undertake (Callard 2018, 57). Developing a virtue is like this: it is a process, but the

end result is that one is transformed epistemically and personally. A virtuous person has a distinctive way of seeing and interacting with the world. She deeply values promoting important human goods both for herself and for others, she knows how to do this in a variety of circumstances, and her desires wholly support her intention to promote these goods. A coward who becomes courageous, then, is epistemically transformed, since she learns something she did now know before, namely, what it is like to be courageous, or what it is like to be someone who is focused on the promotion of an important good even at the expense of personal risk, who is not overwhelmed by fear, and so on. And a cowardly person who becomes courageous also has a radical change in values. The courageous person values goods like saving life or promoting justice more than her own personal safety; these values eclipse her other concerns. A coward, on the other hand values her own safety more than almost anything. In sum, a person begins the project of moral, or character, transformation with one character trait and its associated values and ends with a different trait or set of traits and their own associated values. And this is a transformative experience.

However, morally transformative choice is a distinctive kind of transformative choice for it is undertaken precisely in order to change one's values. The decision to have children, for example, is not primarily taken in order to acquire the new values and preferences which naturally occur when one becomes a parent. The decision is undertaken in order to have children. It just happens that having children also affects and changes a person's values. While this might be a factor in the decision, it is typically not the sole, or even main, factor. The decision to become courageous or generous, however, is a decision to change one's values and preferences—it is made

in order to transform oneself personally. Thus, in the case of intentional moral transformation, the cowardly person chooses certain actions that she believes will cultivate courage and so change her values. She may, for example, choose to join the army, in order to learn to value promoting important goods over personal safety. The stingy person, likewise, chooses actions of generosity in order to become generous and so value the welfare of others over material goods.

Since moral transformation is a species of transformative experience the choice to undergo such an experience is subject to the same challenge as other kinds of transformative choices, namely, one cannot rationally choose to undergo such an experience.[7] For a stingy person to choose to become generous, for instance, she would need to imagine herself as a generous person and assign this a value which she can compare to the value of remaining stingy. The challenge is same as with having one's first child: she knows what it is like to remain stingy, but she does not know what it is like to be generous, for a generous person has a distinctive way of seeing and responding to the world. She sees, for example, her wealth as a means of blessing others and not as a way of securing her own safety or happiness, and when she exercises generosity, it is never with distaste and a sense of loss, but with joy and thanksgiving for the opportunity to promote another's welfare. Moreover, the stingy person cannot use her current preferences to evaluate a scenario in which she is generous, since those preferences are almost certain to change when she actually

[7]I am leaving aside the issue of whether someone might have a moral reason to develop virtue. With Paul, I am looking at this decision through the lens of a personal choice where a person is considering whether it would be better for her life if she were to develop virtue. Paul explicitly states that she is not taking a position on the nature of moral deliberation, i.e., whether it's a form of rational deliberation or its aim is to maximize value (Paul 2015a, 159-160).

becomes generous. She might, for example, evaluate the outcome of being generous in terms of her current preference to accumulate wealth; but if she becomes generous, she will likely no longer value the accumulation of wealth in the same way. Thus, the epistemic challenge of choosing to undergo transformative experience remains present with the choice to transform morally.

But as with other kinds of choices to personally transform, if a person uses third-person evaluations instead of her own, the choice is not authentic. In fact, the need for authenticity in the case of moral transformation might be more acute. Moral transformation typically involves taking new actions with the right motivation in the hopes of developing a virtuous trait, and this likely requires grasping for oneself the appeal of that virtue. In the military, for example, the practice of cadets saluting superiors and using honorific titles is meant to cultivate respectfulness. But this practice is more likely to be effective if the cadet wants to develop respectfulness and so practices saluting and using certain titles with the right attitude, i.e., as a genuine expression of respect. And this is more likely to happen if the cadet values *for herself* acquiring the trait of respectfulness. Thus, morally transformative choice—the choice to transform specific values—might require authenticity if it is to be efficacious.

Thus, the two challenges for agents choosing to undergo a transformative experience are the same that cause problems for the possibility of rational and authentic moral transformation. First, there is the epistemic problem of coming to have the experiential knowledge one needs in order to assign a subjective value to the outcome of becoming a virtuous person—e.g., a person needs to know what it is like to be generous to know how valuable it will be for her to become generous. Second,

the agent's evaluation of the relevant outcomes of her choice should be based on her own experiences and values if the choice is to be authentic. To make such an authentic and rational decision, then, the epistemic bootstrapping problem must be addressed.

Paul's Solution: Discovery and Second Order Desires

Paul poses a solution to the bootstrapping problem. She maintains that the knowledge needed to assign a subjective value to an outcome, and thus, to rationally choose that outcome, needs to be knowledge of what the experience is like. While she argues that the person does not have this sort of knowledge of what are, perhaps the central features of, the outcome of a transformative experience, she does have experience with *some* features of the outcome, namely, the experience of discovering something new. As discussed, when a person has a transformative experience she gains new knowledge and comes to value new things. For many, transformative experiences are valuable in part *because* the person comes to learn and experience something new. In short, these experiences provide avenues for discovery, a phenomenon with which many are already acquainted and also value (Paul 2014, 92).

Thus, Paul argues that the fact that a person can value discovery sidesteps the bootstrapping problem. More specifically, since a person knows that one outcome of a transformative experience is that she comes to know something new, and since she has experienced and values this kind of discovery, she can assign a positive value to an outcome where she thinks she will have this kind of discovery. In this way she can rationally and authentically choose the action with the best outcome. For instance, I knew that when I became a parent, I would have a transformative experience and that

I would come to discover something I didn't know before: what it is like not only to care for an infant, but to be responsible for her. Because I knew that I would discover something new, and because I value discovering new things, I could assign a positive value to the outcome of becoming a parent and so prefer it among other available options. Therefore, if I have a strong desire to discover what fatherhood is like over remaining ignorant, I can authentically and rationally choose to become a father, since I know that I will value discovering what this experience is like.

I do not think, however, that appealing to the value of discovery solves the bootstrapping problem, for wanting to discover what an experience is like is a second-order preference that is dependent upon the object of discovery. In other words, a person doesn't have a general preference for discovery that is applicable categorically. I do not prefer to discover what *any* kind of food tastes like. My preference to discover new and exciting food excludes any form of fried insects or arachnids as well as certain animal organs and it definitely excludes balut. The same is true with respect to character traits and their associated values. I want to discover what it is like to be merciful, but do not want to discover what it is like to be cruel. A person's preference for discovery, then, is necessarily tied to how much a person already values the object or state toward which the discovery is directed. I want to discover what it is like to be merciful, but not what it is like to be a cruel, because I value being merciful and do not value cruelty.[8] (Now, it could turn out that my values

[8]Agnes Callard offers a similar objection. She claims that second-order preferences work when one has a first-order preference to ground it on. However, a preference for preference-change lacks a grounded first-order preference and so is an "[un]stable anchor for choice" (Callard 2018, 52-53).

change once I am in a new epistemic position. Once I fully know what it is like to be merciful, for example, I may find it torturous and so come to disvalue it. But the fact remains that any desire to discover what something is like generally depends upon a positive evaluation of the object itself.)

If, then, my preferences for discovery depend upon how much and whether I value the object(s) of that discovery, then the bootstrapping challenge has not been met. I only value discovering what it is like to become a parent when I already value parenthood; but, according to Paul, I cannot know how valuable it would be for me to be a parent without actually being a parent. So, any decision to become a parent will not be made rationally. I suppose that there could exist a case where one does not value becoming a parent, but still wants to discover what being a parent is like.[9] However, I cannot make rational sense of such a strange internal inconsistency apart from some psychoses. So, while I can rationally and authentically value discovery, I do not value discovery in a specific situation unless I also value the object of discovery. If I do not know what it's like, for example, to be a parent, then I cannot assign it a subjective value in any epistemically responsible way. Thus, Paul's own solution fails to resolve the bootstrapping problem. Thus, it remains unknown whether it's possible to make a rational and authentic choice to have a transformative experience.

[9]Assuming no equivocation in terms or perspective.

II. The Possibility of Rational Moral Transformation

Admiration

There have been a variety of responses to Paul's challenge. Many of them focus on her claim that we cannot know what a certain experience would be like without undergoing that experience.[10] I follow a different strategy. First, my target is narrow: I only examine the rationality of moral transformation. I leave other examples of transformative choice to the side. Second, I first look at what sort of experience can inspire a person to choose to develop a moral virtue, and then I argue that a decision made on this basis can be rational. This will reveal where I disagree with Paul's conception of rational choice.

Linda Zagzebski argues that the emotion of admiration often motivates people to become virtuous. She characterizes admiration in terms of the following features (Zagzebski 2017, 32-35; 40-44). First, as with other emotions, admiration is directed towards an object, namely, that which is admirable. As a result, admiration can be fitting or unfitting; it is fitting when it is directed towards that which is admirable and

[10]There are two approaches to rejecting this claim that Rebecca Chan helpfully divides (Chan 2023). First, some advance the case that there are many circumstances where one might have a pretty good idea about what it involved with a particular transformative choice. That is, one can approximate what it is like knowledge. For instance, Harman (2015) argues one might have quite a lot of experience babysitting or raising a younger sibling such that she should have sufficient understanding of parenthood would be like. Paul rejects this line of reasoning and responds that there is still a unique phenomenological character to the experience of being a parent that remains distinct from other near-cases (2015a, 157).

The second general strategy does not deny that it is difficult to know what a transformative experience will be like, but blames this difficulty on a lack of exercising the right kind of imagination. Amy Kind (2020) argues that it is possible, though effortful, to imagine what something we have not experienced is like, since the knowledge required is a matter of degree and not kind. Thus, we must use experiences we are more familiar with to project onto the new experience. Some argue that art can help us to do this (Aumann 2022).

My strategy is different from these two main lines. I reject the claim that one needs what it is like knowledge (or any sort of approximation) in order to authentically and on a rational basis decide to undergo a transformation.

unfitting when it is directed towards that which is not admirable. Second, and relatedly, when a person admires someone, the object *appears* to her to be admirable. But this does not mean that the person will *believe* the object is admirable. She will only form that belief if she trusts the appearance. Third, admiration is associated with a characteristic feeling. It feels differently than love, anger, contempt, and fear. Zagzebski follows Haidt, who describes this as a feeling of uplift or elevation (Zagzebski 2017, 40).[11] Fourth, this affective component can, in the right circumstances, give rise to a distinctive motivation, namely the desire to emulate the admired person. In short, the object of admiration can appear "imitably attractive"—not negative or neutral—and the "way in which the object is attractive typically gives rise to the urge to imitate or emulate the object" (Zagzebski 2017, 35).

Under what circumstances does admiration generate the desire to emulate? Zagzebski argues that admiration is directed toward a high degree of a human excellence, such as intellectual or artistic genius, moral leadership, courage, compassion, physical strength, or the ability to sing low. Among these excellences, she distinguishes between natural versus acquired excellences. Natural excellences are those that rely on some inborn talent while acquired excellences are those that are formed through consistent and intentional effort. She argues that while a person might admire natural excellences, she is not typically motivated to imitate the people with those excellences (at least not in the respect in which they have the natural excellence). When one admires an acquired excellence, on the other hand, she is

[11]See Haidt's (2003) "Elevation and the Positive Psychology of Morality", for example.

likely to emulate the person with this excellence. Since moral virtue is (largely) an acquired excellence, moral virtue can inspire the desire to emulate.

So, in the right circumstances, admiration can motivate someone to become virtuous, to emulate an exemplar. Zagzebski claims that emulation is a form of imitation in which the emulated person is perceived as a model in some respect, in the sense that one wants to be like the person she emulates. Zagzebski agrees with Vellemen, who argues that admiration can lead to the emulation of an admired person's motives and actions through wishful picturing of oneself in the image of the admired person (Zagzebski 2017, 136).[12] In other words, one imagines herself as courageous, or generous, or whatever, and then goes about enacting this self-image. In projecting herself in the image she then enacts, she gradually becomes the person she wants to be. In sum, then, on Zagzebski's model, moral development begins with admiration of an exemplar, which leads to an imaginative ideal of oneself, which in turn motivates her to emulate the exemplar's motives and acts ultimately leading her to have the virtue for herself.

Admiration and Rational Choice

With this picture of how someone might be motivated to become more virtuous, I return to the issue of whether it can be rational and authentic to decide to become virtuous. Recall that according to Paul, to choose rationally between two courses of action involves picturing the possible outcomes associated with each action and assigning to each a probability and a subjective value; the best action is the

[12]See Velleman (2002) "Motivation by Ideal".

one associated with the highest expected value. How does the experience of admiration and emulation cohere with this picture? When someone admires someone for their virtue, they see that virtue as admirable and so good and choice-worthy. Under the right circumstances, she then uses her grasp of this virtue—her perception of how good it is—to create an ideal image of herself in which she possesses the virtue. This image enables her to assign a value to the outcome where she is virtuous, and to decide whether to take actions that will lead to virtue or remain as she is. If she judges that being virtuous is better, then she will choose to take the actions that lead to the development of a virtuous character in herself.

My suggestion is that there is no reason to deny that a decision made on this basis can be rational and authentic, even though it is not based on 'what it's like' knowledge. It is rational because the emotion of admiration can provide one with good evidence that a trait is valuable and worth possessing, even if she does not know exactly what it is like to possess the trait. And it is authentic because one is not relying on the testimony of others, but on her own emotional experience to make this judgement.[13] If this is correct, then we should reject Paul's claim that the only reasonable way to assign an outcome a subjective value is based on knowledge of what it would be like. In some cases, a person can rationally evaluate that something would be good for her, even if she does not have experience with what it would be like for her. This is because the emotion of admiration can provide good evidence that something is admirable, and so choice-worthy and good for her to have.[14]

[13] Of course, as mentioned, third person testimony can add justificatory weight to this authentic belief.

In sum, to admire someone like Socrates, for example, is to be imitably attracted to his virtue and wisdom. Someone can use her admiration for this virtue and wisdom to imagine what her life would be like if she too were virtuous and wise. Of course, the image of herself as wise will look different than her image of Socrates. Her life has its own social, religious, and familial context that will shape the vision of herself as virtuous and wise. But still, this image of herself as virtuous and wise will be attractive to her as well. So even though she may have yet to experience what it is like to be virtuous and wise, admiration provides her the tools to imagine a future in which she has these qualities and rationally evaluate it as choice-worthy. Admiration, while not providing 'what it's like' knowledge, does provide evidence that the admired virtue is admirable and so good and choice-worthy. Thus, admiration can begin the process of moral transformation.

My claim, then, is that admiration provides the basis for rationally and authentically assigning a subjective value to an outcome where a person acquires a virtuous trait that they did not have before. However, Paul might insist that the kind of knowledge procured through admiration is still missing that which only 'what it's like' knowledge can supply. This is because admiration can lead us astray by making us think that a certain trait would be admirable and so good for us to have when it is

[14]There are other emotions that are associated with moral transformation and growth. That is, they provide avenues for one to belief that something would be good (or bad) for them and so come to desire or be repelled by them. Aristotle, for instance, treated shame as a "proto" virtue because of its potential to motivate one to change her behavior (*NE* 4.9, 1128b10ff). See Marta Jimenez for an in-depth account of Aristotle's treatment of shame and its role in moral development (Jimenez 2020). Shame's cousin, guilt, has been similarly treated by Jennifer Herdt (Herdt 2016, 240-44). Zagzebski is also open to emotions other than admiration—she specifically talks about contempt (2017, 32)—providing this kind of motivation. However, her project focuses on providing a moral theory grounded in morally good exemplars. Thus, it is restricted to the kinds of emotions that are appropriate for one to respect a virtuous exemplar.

not. Thus, 'what it's like' knowledge is the only sort of knowledge that can provide good evidence that an outcome would be valuable for us.

The first thing to note in response to this objection is that 'what it is like' knowledge might lead us astray as well. One might 'know what it is like' to torture insects under a magnifying glass and value it, for instance, leading her to an authentic, rational (though not transformative) choice to become skilled in enhanced interrogation. However, when utilizing her skills on her first human subject, she could come to realize that torturing another person is not valuable for her. Therefore, Paul should be hesitant to claim that the fact that admiration can lead us astray disqualifies it as a source of evidence, since 'what it's like' knowledge can also mislead. Still, the fact remains that admiration can be mistaken, and is perhaps more likely to be mistaken than 'what it's like' knowledge. So, more needs to be said to address this concern.

Trusting Admiration

Admiration can lead us astray. Someone might admire a merciless judge for his strict adherence to the law, or a brutally honest philosopher for his commitment to the truth no matter what the cost, or someone skilled at interrogation as a result of his lack of regard for human suffering. As a result of this admiration, someone might form an ideal image of herself, evaluate it positively, and then take the steps required to develop one of these traits herself. But as she comes to develop this trait, she might find that it is in fact not admirable and good, that she was mistaken to admire it and believe it choice-worthy for her to be this way. Thus, admiration might lead her to undergo a transformation that she does not really want.

How, then, can someone know when her admiration is fitting? When she admires something, it appears admirable to her, and she takes this as evidence that it is admirable and so choice-worthy and good for her to possess. As a result, she strives to attain it. So, it is crucial that one can trust the emotion of admiration. But admiration is an emotion and like all emotions can fail to fit its object. So when can someone be sure that admiration provides good evidence that its object is admirable?

Zazgebski addresses this problem (2017, 45).[15] She argues that we face a problem of psychic circularity that is a generalization of the well-known problem of epistemic circularity. The problem of epistemic circularity is this: a person cannot trust that one of her beliefs is true without trusting her belief-forming faculties as a whole, but she cannot tell if her belief forming faculties as a whole are reliable without relying on the truth of particular beliefs. Zagzebski claims that the same problem holds for all psychic states, including perception, memory, and emotion. A person cannot trust that a memory of hers is accurate without trusting her capacity to remember in general. But she cannot trust her capacity to remember in general without trusting some of her particular memories. The emotions, including admiration, are no different. What is the way out of this circularity? According to Zagzebski, "The best [one] can do to be confident an emotion is fitting is the same as the best [she] can do to be confident that a belief is true: [she] find[s] that it survives reflection over time on our total set of psychic states when [she is] using them the best [she] can to make them fit their objects." (Zagzebski 2017, 45).[16]

[15]See also Zagzebski (2012), chapter 2 for a fuller account.

[16]Take for example coming to trust (generally) that chairs will hold one's weight when sitting in them. How does one know that his belief-forming capacity is correct? Upon reflection, over time,

According to Zagzebski, this requires, among other things, conscientious self-reflection (2017, 49-50). This self-reflection can be aided by becoming aware of biases in admiration and using this awareness to critically reflect on her experiences of admiration. We tend, for example, to admire good-looking people, people of high social status, and those who hold our own political views (Zagzebski 2017, 47-48).[17] A person should bear this in mind, then, as she reflects on whether her experiences of admiration are fitting. In addition, Zagzebski claims that one should take the experiences of admiration of others seriously as she critically reflects on her own experiences (2017, 49). In short, then, a person can trust her experiences of admiration when they survive reflection.

Zazgebski also notes that we tend to trust some emotions more than others. Romantic love, anger, and some forms of fear tend not to survive reflection. Recently, some have questioned the trust-worthiness of disgust (Haidt, et al. 1993). She argues that we put more trust in emotions such as sympathy, compassion, indignation, and admiration. She claims that this is because trusting these emotions is required for a functional moral life. I think there may be another explanation for why we put more trust in admiration. Zagzebski points to research by Jonathan Haidt, *et al*. that indicates that people who utilize disgust as a reason to act or not cannot articulate a justification for their judgment other than the feeling (2017, 46 n.17).

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he comes to trust in his particular belief about chairs being able to hold his weight. Thus, when he comes upon a new chair, absent some caution indicators, he trusts his belief that the chair will hold his weight.

[17]See Becker and Luthar (2007) for provide evidence that physical attractiveness plays a large role in attractiveness and Joseph Sweetman, et al. (2013) have proposed that admiration plays an important role for the maintenance of social hierarchies.

That is, when asked for a justificatory reason for the disgust, the respondents typically respond with "it's gross" or "it's just wrong", but again do not offer a reason. But if we conscientiously reflect on our disgust and find that we cannot provide a reason for it, then we may doubt whether it is fitting. The objects of admiration, by contrast, often display concrete properties to which one can point to justify her admiration. For example, when a person feels admiration, she can typically point to particular excellences displayed by an exemplar, e.g., work ethic, kindness, tenacity, etc. Of course, this data does not make admiration, and other emotions like it, infallible, it just gives another reason to trust them, *prima facie*.

In sum, I have argued Paul's challenge to the rationality of moral transformation can be met by appealing to the emotion of admiration. While the non-virtuous person does not know what it is like to be virtuous, the emotion of admiration can provide good evidence that becoming virtuous would be good and choice-worthy for her. When someone admires a virtuous person, the possession of a virtuous trait appears good and choice-worthy and motivates her to emulate the virtuous person in the relevant respects. If this appearance survives critical reflection, then she has good reason to think the emotion is fitting and a choice to emulate on its basis is rational and authentic.

Admiration and aspiration

Agnes Callard, in her book *Aspiration: The Agency of Becoming* (2018) also addresses the rationality of transformation, or, as she calls it, of aspiration. She focuses on cases where a person aspires to have new (different) values than the ones she currently possesses. She cites as examples cases where one aspires to become a

music lover, a philosopher, a skilled athlete or master chess player (Callard 2018, 4-7). What unites these pursuits is that they change what one cares about in a substantial way. In Paul's language, they are personally transformational. Callard is keen to distinguish between what she calls cultivation and aspiration. When someone *cultivates* an interest or value in herself, she is deepening a value that she already has. But when someone *aspires* to an interest or value, she is trying to acquire a value that she does not yet possess at all (2018, 47-48, 74-76, 90-93).

Like Paul, Callard notes that that the process of aspiration is in tension with Decision Theory, broadly understood. She stresses that Decision Theory holds, very broadly, that a rational decision is one which promotes in some way the values that one already has. But when someone aspires, she is acting for the sake of values that she does not already possess: "The problem posed by large-scale transformative pursuits is this: they require [one] to act on reasons that reflect a grasp of the value that [she is] working so hard and so long to come into contact with, but [she] can know that value only once [she has] come into contact with it" (Callard 2018, 76). But Callard claims that the cost of holding that these ends are pursued for no reason, or bad reasons, would be to greatly restrict the scope of practical rationality, for while one could rationalize engagement with certain values once they are grasped and possessed, she could not rationalize the pursuit of trying to grasp these values.

Callard claims that in order to account for aspiration's rationality one must appeal to what she calls a proleptic reason. Proleptic reasons are inchoate, anticipatory, and indirect grasps of the good that the aspirant is trying to know better. The aspiring opera lover, for example, has a proleptic grasp of the value of opera,

even though she does not currently value opera herself. And this proleptic grasp of the value of opera motivates her to try to aspire to understand fully the value of opera and guides her choices as she aspires. Callard argues that this grasp gives her a reason (both justificatory and motivational), for example, to attend more operas, to acquire knowledge about music appreciation, to spend time with those who love opera, etc. In this process she learns about the value of opera and at the end of this process she will value opera for herself. Thus, Callard claims that one can explain the rationality of aspiration via the introduction of proleptic reasons.

Callard's picture can apply to the case of moral aspiration. The stingy person has a proleptic grasp of the value of being generous, even though she does not currently value generosity herself. As an aspirant, then, she does not reason from her actual values, which include accumulating material goods for herself, but from her proleptic reason (her aspirational value) of being generous, of which she has only a provisional grasp. This aspirational value motivates her to take the actions she thinks the generous person would take (e.g., giving her goods away, using her time to help others) in an attempt to fully grasp the value of being generous. As she continues to act on her proleptic reason, she comes to fill out her initial grasp of the value of being generous and ultimately comes to value it herself. So, by the end of the aspirational process, she no longer needs to act from her proleptic reasons as they have become fully realized reasons. She possesses the aspired to value and her actions flow from it.

I am in broad agreement with Callard's psychological description of aspiration. However, there is a gap in her account: Callard says very little about how

and why someone who does not value something at all can come to have a proleptic grasp of its value. How, exactly, does someone come to see generosity, for example, as valuable, when she does not value it at all herself? How, in other words, does the process of aspiration get started? Callard notes that some external event or factor brings potential aspirants into "original contact with the values that will eventually become objects of aspirational pursuit" (2018, 64). But of course, this is not enough. Something about the contact must *affect* the person such that she attains a proleptic grasp of its value and is motivated to learn more.

My account of admiration bridges the gap between external contact and aspiration in the case of virtue. When a person is brought into contact with a virtuous exemplar, the experience can, in the right circumstances, evoke the emotion of admiration. This emotion involves grasping that the exemplar has a quality that is admirable and so good or valuable, even if one does not fully understand the value of being generous. And this grasp motivates the person to try to learn more about this quality, through the process of emulation, until she comes to possess this valuable trait for herself. Thus, my account of admiration and its role in transformation fills out in important ways Callard's recent account of aspiration.[18]

However, my account of admiration and its role in aspiration also brings to light a question for her account. It must be noted that contact with an exemplar *can*

[18]Laurie Paul argues (2021, 484) that Callard fails to solve the 'hard' problem of the rationality of aspiration, for she does not explain the rationality of the initial decision to aspire to acquire one value rather than another. According to Paul, Callard has not provided an epistemic basis for the original choice. As I've argued, my account of admiration does this. It not only provides an internal motivation, but through trusting admiration's fit, it provides good evidence that the admired virtue is valuable and therefore choice-worthy. Thus, based on admiration, one can have a good reason to undergo a transformational experience, or for that matter, to enter into aspiration.

inspire admiration and imitation, but it can also fail to inspire admiration, or it can inspire a weak admiration that does not motivate emulation. What explains why one person admires and another does not? One possible answer can be found in Aristotle. Aristotle claims that only people who have been brought up well can acquire virtue (*NE* II.3, 1104b11-12). What he means is that young people must be taught from a young age (through parents, institutions, culture, laws) to value virtue so that they will be motivated to acquire it. This suggests an answer to the question: what explains the difference between someone who admires virtue and is motivated to pursue it and someone who does not is that the former already values virtue, even if only to a small degree. But if this is the correct answer, then admiration cannot inspire what Callard calls aspiration, but only cultivation.

To address this issue one needs to find another way to explain the difference between those who admire virtue and those who do not. I think there is another way. Instead of appealing to the features of the potential admirer to explain the difference, one can appeal to the features of the experience of contact with the exemplar. I think that certain encounters with a virtuous exemplar are so powerful that they can cause a person to recognize a value, via admiration, that she has not recognized before. I point to two features of such encounters: affection and close personal contact, which leads to magnification of the emotion of admiration, and salience.

First, personal affection and close contact with an exemplar makes the experience of admiration more likely and also magnifies the experience of the emotion. When a relationship is characterized by affection and close personal contact, the admirable goodness of an exemplar is more likely to be perceived, via

admiration, by the moral agent (Roberts and Spezio 2019: 89). Moreover, in these cases of close personal contact and affection, the affect one experiences through admiration is magnified, and this is linked to a greater desire to emulate. Human experience bears this out. For better or worse, the most influential people in any human life are those with whom one is in closest contact—parents, siblings, coaches, teachers, etc. So, it is safe to say that when a person is in close contact with an admirable exemplar, she is more likely to experience the emotion of admiration in a deep way. Distant exemplars, too, can evoke these deeper emotions, but when they do, there is often a personal connection. A person is more likely, for example, to have this kind of distant "close" contact with an exemplar who has a similar childhood, upbringing, or life event. (This magnification of affect is not confined to positive exemplars alone. Experiencing injustice at the murder or assault of a loved one, for example, can also amplify the affect of the relevant emotion.) Of course, while close personal contact might increase the affect of an emotion, there is no guarantee that it will. Even after three years spent in close proximity to Jesus, for example, Judas Iscariot remained unaffected in some important ways. However, when personal affection and close contact characterize the relationship between an individual and a virtuous exemplar, that individual is more likely to experience admiration.

Second, in addition to magnification, I suggest that some experiences are so salient that one cannot help but attend to them. Consider the act of generosity displayed by the Bishop in *Les Misérables*, for example, where he gives the silver candlesticks to Jean Valjean instead of having him arrested. Virtue and goodness

shine through such acts and become so salient that they can cause someone who is not already inclined to virtue to admire it. Context will determine when and how, and to whom such break-throughs occur, of course. But for good experiences, I have in mind those where moral excellence is so manifest that one cannot help but notice it. Consider having one's life saved by a friend and fellow soldier on the field of battle, being received without condemnation after confessing something shameful, being provided with clothing and a haircut after months of being homeless and without work, or being adopted. (Bad experiences might invite other emotions, like disgust; I will leave them mostly to the imagination, but horrific experiences of loss, war, and famine surely must qualify.)

My contention, then, is that these experiences of goodness and virtue can overwhelm a person's everyday habits of attention and valuation and call attention to them. Roberts and Spezio refer to some virtuous actions as having a glory that becomes manifest, or visible to the senses—"the basic 'glory' that is partially realized in virtue becomes visible" when virtuous people are acting virtuously (2019, 88). Beauty, likewise can have this breakthrough effect. Indeed, Plato characterizes virtue and virtuous actions as *kalon,* a term that can be translated as admirable, beautiful, or fine. His use of this term captures the idea that virtuous people and actions have a striking quality that can capture our attention and evoke appreciation in the form of admiration. Kristjánsson claims these some virtuous actions elicit "awe" (2017). All of these terms, 'glory,' 'beauty,' and 'awe,' signal the idea that some experiences of virtue are so striking that they have the capacity to elicit appreciation, as I argue, in

the form of admiration, in others, even in the absence of an existing disposition to value virtue.

In sum, we can explain why an encounter with a virtuous exemplar can evoke admiration in some but not others without appealing to the idea that the former values virtue while the latter does not. Experiences of close contact with exemplars for someone or profound and salient experiences of virtue in another can raise the likelihood that one will attend to, and admire, virtue. Thus, someone's usual indifference to virtue —her usual inability to admire admirable things—need not prohibit her from appreciating some acts of virtue. Some experiences will penetrate to the point where she can recognize virtue as admirable regardless of the current state of her moral formation. There is reason to think, then, that one can come to admire something that she does not currently value. So, there is reason to think that aspiration can get started, and get started rationally, through admiration.

III. Conclusion

I have made the case that admiration provides the epistemic basis needed for one to imagine and assign a subjective value to a future outcome in which she is virtuous, so that she can make a rational and authentic choice to undergo a personal moral transformation. 'What it's like' knowledge is not the only epistemically responsible means for providing a basis for subjective evaluation. In fact, admiration avoids the bootstrapping problem brought about by insisting that 'what it's like' knowledge is necessary to ground rational, authentic transformative choice. Someone can assign an epistemologically grounded subjective value to becoming virtuous based on her fitting admiration of it. And this fitting admiration can

motivate her to aspire to virtue. The decision to morally transform can be both rational and authentic.

Chapter 2: Getting to the Heart of Virtue: (Better) Advice for Growing in Moral Excellence

Let's say that someone had undergone a transformative or otherwise transcendent experience. A classic example from literature is Dicken's Ebenezer Scrooge, who one night is put through a number of experiences wherein he decides to become someone different.[19] He goes to bed a miser and wakes with the intention to be a generous man. The story, of course, ends with him generously providing for Cratchit and his family, joining his nephew for Christmas dinner, and eventually becoming the embodiment of the Christmas spirit. Though he experienced a transformation on that fateful Christmas Eve, the transformation was a transformation of intention, or perhaps his purpose(s) in life, and not one of character. It was the beginning of character transformation. Many find themselves in similar positions…a miser, or its equivalent, in some particular area of life. Though I presume few have hosted the three Ghosts of Christmas in their dreams, it is reasonable to assume that many have experiences out of which they resolve to change.[20] The resolve is only the beginning, though. What must take place to complete the resolution or intention? What must Scrooge have done in the years following his Christmas encounter such that he was able to un-learn his miserly ways and to take on such a generous spirit that Dickens says he embodied the very spirit of Christmas (i.e., generosity that calls to mind the enormous act of love and blessing from God that Christmas celebrates)?

[19]Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*, various editions.

[20]I argue that this is rational and possible in Chapter 1.

The question, then, is that once one resolves to become virtuous, what steps does she take to actually become so? The most common answer, given by Aristotle and many following him, is to do as the virtuous person does (Aristotle *NE*, II.4 1105b6-12). This advice, which I refer to as the "standard advice", seems to accord with how most practical matters are learned. One finds an expert, observes how she does things, and attempts to replicate those actions in some context within one's own life. In the case of virtue, it is not enough to merely replicate the actions of a virtuous person—the moral expert; it also must be done from the with right intention, desire, and feeling. As Aristotle says, "Actions, then, are called just and temperate when they are such as the just or temperate man would do; but it is not the man who does these things who is just or temperate, but the man who also does them as just and temperate men do them" (*NE* II.4, 1105b5-8). It seems reasonable to assume that Aristotle is proposing that people need to not only practice virtue, but to practice it in the manner (i.e., with same practical attitudes, or internal states) of the virtuous person in order to learn to be virtuous. In practice, however, taking virtuous action in this manner is not possible for moral progressors.

There are two problems for moral progressors that I highlight. First, it is not possible for some progressors, those who are akratic, to act as the virtuous person does. She literally cannot refrain from, for example, eating a donut. Second, some progressors, those who are enkratic, can reproduce virtuous actions, but they cannot do them as the virtuous person does them—i.e., in the same manner or with the same practical attitudes. Enkratic progressors can, for example, avoid eating the donut. However, they will need to manipulate themselves somehow in order to refrain from

eating the donut—e.g., promise themselves that they can have a mint after lunch or a beer after work. What moral progressors cannot do is to attend to the donut and refrain from eating it in the manner of the virtuous person—e.g., perceiving the donut as bad for her health, so as undesirable, and therefore avoiding it with ease. Thus, we are presented with a challenge to the standard advice: if moral progressors cannot practice acting in the manner of the virtuous person, how can they ever habituate virtue?

Briefly, my answer is that the moral progressor should focus her efforts on acquiring through habituation virtuous beliefs, desires, and affections rather than focusing on performing virtuous action. These practical attitudes—beliefs, desires, and affections—underlie virtuous action. Merely performing the actions of a virtuous person absent the manner is deficient because, while it addresses the external behavior, it does not explicitly address the internal state of character. Thus, to learn to do as the virtuous does in the manner she does it, one needs to transform her practical attitudes. Thus, the actions of the virtuous person should not be the primary focus of the learner's practice, but instead, she ought to focus on habituating the underlying beliefs, desires, and affections.

In Part, I unpack the challenge to the standard advice. I begin by providing an account of the virtuous person; this is the progressor's aim. Next, I consider the standard advice and why it makes *prima facie* sense for practical endeavors like virtue formation. Then, I explore how the standard advice is deficient, or incomplete, advice for moral progressors at two different levels. Lastly, I advance the position that the standard advice, as is, implies a system of behavior management and neglects

character transformation at the value level. Part II focuses on strategies and tactics to transform values and not merely manage behaviors. First, I lay out an overall strategy for moral progressors. Because of the habituated, practical nature of virtue, the transformation process involves both in-forming and re-forming habits. Unwanted beliefs, desires, and affections will need to be replaced or changed and new habits formed. Then, I discuss and apply some specific tactics as examples of those one might employ in order to defeat existing habituated desires and feelings and to establish new ones in the course of coming to see the world and form beliefs about it in the manner of the virtuous person.

I. The Deficiency of the Standard Advice to Develop Virtue

The Virtuous Person

To understand and analyze how one comes to be virtuous, it is helpful to understand the goal. What kind of person is the moral aspirant attempting to become? Who is a virtuous person? A virtuous person is both internally and externally rightly-ordered within herself and her various social relationships and environment. Her whole self is directed toward living a particular kind of life where her will is set upon the promotion of the various human goods with which she is in contact, including her own and those others within the range of her effective will (Willard 2018, 367).[21] Her will is supported in this endeavor by her thoughts and

[21]It is not my purpose to enumerate an exhaustive list of goods, but the following are the kinds of goods to which I'm pointing: personal autonomy, human dignity, truth-telling, the promotion of another's flourishing, fulfilling familial obligations and those obligations pertaining to one's social and occupational roles, as well as upholding various societal institutions like just distribution of benefits and burdens, obedience to just laws and contract-keeping, etc.

feelings. They relate to one another in a mutually supporting manner. Her thoughts and feelings produce and reinforce her desires and intentions and her desire and intentions produce and support her thoughts and feelings. Her body, the storehouse of her power and action, is poised to execute her will. She has habituated and trained it such that it more-or-less automatically acts to accomplish her steady will. It is through her body that she interacts with the external world. She acts out of it, with its support, and she is acted upon through it.

While she does not have the same power over her external relationships as she has over her internal ones, she nevertheless exercises control over the things she can in order to maintain her steady purposes. She purposely surrounds herself with others who are also intent to promote human goods and creates arrangements for herself and others that support her awareness of those goods and the capability to affect and effect them. With her capacities integrated and working as a whole, she then naturally attends to those goods around her at any given time—those which she can affect and those she cannot, as well as their relative value. She also remains aware of external non-goods and evils insofar as necessary in order to promote those goods. She avoids giving the non-goods and evils any additional attention. For example, she might rightly attend to her finances to determine the capacity she has to help those in need (i.e., as an instrument to accomplish good), but she will avoid dwelling on them as if her finances themselves were a final good. Thus, her various capacities, mind,

will, body, social relationships are therefore acting together in harmony with one another in a single, whole purposefully directed life.[22]

It is important to note that the virtuous person is wise. In addition to recognizing the goods around her and their relative worth, she knows how to promote them.[23] That is, the virtuous person will recognize when someone is being bullied and feel appropriately grieved and indignant. She will have the courage to act in order to correct the injustice, but she may choose not to act all. Because she is wise, she will recognize which goods need to be promoted. In this case, she may need to intervene to stop the injustice; however, she may need to allow the person being bullied to attempt to respond himself. Perhaps, his autonomy and opportunity to grow in courage is more important than immediately intervening. If intervention is best, she'll know the manner that will best promote justice and restoration. If not, she'll know how to approach each party with respect to justice, courage, and self-regard.

In sum, the virtuous person values (has appropriate beliefs and desires regarding) the relevant goods within her effective will, knows how to promote these goods, and will be unimpeded—in fact helped—by her desires and emotions in her steady intention to promote them. To illustrate this, consider a more mature, virtuous Mr. Scrooge. His inchoate intention to be more generous has been fed and developed over long years of intelligent, intentional practice. He really has become a generous

[22]I've been heavily influenced by Dallas Willard in this presentation of the good person, particularly his Renovation of Heart (2002), chapter 2 and a subsection of chapter 12 entitled *A Composite Picture of "Children of Light"*.

[23]Philippa Foot on wisdom is very similar (Foot 2002, 5-6).

person. So, if he were presented with the Cratchits as he is in Dickens's novel, he would attend to their situation and recognize an opportunity to promote their good with his own material wealth. His thoughts and emotions would support his will in this intent. He would have pity or compassion, for example, when he attends to their plight and be moved to act. His body would not have the visceral reactions he once had to let go of any of his own wealth and is instead poised to support his desires and intentions to promote the Cratchit's good in this way. Based on his existing relationship with his nephew and family, he will know how best to offer such support—anonymously, in person, or in another way to prevent other factors from hindering the good his generous material gift would promote.[24]

The Standard Advice

How does one become like the virtuous person that I have described? There seems little doubt that some people tend to be closer to virtue than others. Whether nature or nurture contributes most to this matter is practically irrelevant to the situation that one finds herself in: intent on becoming virtuous, but not yet. Thus, how does she, beginning from where she is, grow to become a virtuous person? The standard advice given by Aristotle is that to become virtuous, one must do as the virtuous does. This advice has taken one form or another throughout history, but continues to be in the forefront in how virtue development is considered and analyzed. For instance, Julia Annas, following Aristotle, considers virtue to be a skill

[24]I recall an instance as a young college freshman where I refused to allow a friend's father to pay for dinner because of my prideful need to not accept help. Bob Cratchit is not portrayed this way by Dickens, but anyone who has tried to give something good to someone, knows it isn't always received well. The virtuous person would know how to best be generous given the social environment.

whereby the virtuous person knows what ought to be done in particular practical situations and can perform that action well and with facility (Annas 2011, 16). Much like a master builder knows what ought to be done in order to build what he intends, the virtuous person knows what ought to be done in order to promote, say, justice. And like the builder's capability to accomplish his build well and with facility, so also the virtuous person promotes justice excellently and with facility.

Because the standard advice is so prolific and long-standing, there is likely something to it. Indeed, there are good, *prima facie*, reasons to think the standard advice is practically helpful. First, a virtuous person, as I have described her, is wise: she recognizes the goods that are at play in any situation and knows how to promote. Thus, virtue is a kind of practical knowledge and to learn to do practical things, one must put those things into practice. For example, one cannot learn to perform an appendectomy without scrubbing into an operating room and doing it. No amount of observation or information gathering can form in a person the skills she needs to perform such a procedure. There are no substitutes for practice. Second, one becomes better at practical things the more she engages in the practical activities associated with those things. We see clear examples of this kind of development in our practical professions like medicine, plumbing, and piloting. In each of these professions there is some amount of professional training followed by a tiered apprenticeship culminating in an acknowledgement of expertise by others in the profession—chiefs of surgery, master plumbers, and plane captains. Third, some emulation and mimicking of experts is expected at various stages of practical development as well as a certain amount of autonomy given to and taken by those

still under apprenticeship. Consider the path to becoming a surgeon—medical school including its practicum requirements which lead to a license, on the job training through a residency program, then an internship to become a specialist. Thus, the standard advice makes sense for the development of virtue if it is like these other practical endeavors. That is, the apprentice in virtue would need to practice recognizing when certain goods are present and their relationship to one another as well as learning how to appropriately promote them. Some interaction with a master—a wise, virtuous person—who can model, teach, and train them to recognize these goods and show them how they are best promoted is required. Thus, the standard advice assumes that virtue is a kind of practical knowledge of seeing and promoting human goods learned through practice in collaboration with an expert.

Moral Progressors Cannot Follow the Standard Advice

In this section I will make a case that the standard advice is deficient advice for mature adults wishing to progress in virtue. To illustrate this, I begin with Aristotle's characterizations of various kinds of *personas*, or character types. The first character type is a person who is not virtuous. Aristotle utilizes temperance as the illustrative virtue. The intemperate falsely believes certain things are goods and she likewise desires these same supposed goods. For instance, she may falsely believe that satisfying her bodily pleasures is very valuable and her desires are in line with her beliefs. The next character type is that of an akratic person. The akratic person has the right beliefs about what is valuable, e.g., health, but she has strong desires for bodily pleasure which she cannot overcome. Thus, she fails to act in a temperate manner that promotes her health. The third character type is the enkratic

(strong-willed or self-controlled) person. She, like the akratic, believes that health is valuable, but she still has lingering desires to gratify bodily pleasures. Unlike the akratic, though, the enkratic is able, with effort, to overcome those desires in order to promote her health. Finally, the last type is a virtuous, or temperate, person. She rightly values health and her desires are directed toward things that promote it, so that they naturally support, and do not hinder, her intention act temperately, or virtuously. She does not have to wrestle with recalcitrant desires in order to act on her intention to promote her own health. She is able to so because she has aligned her beliefs and desires toward promoting a good (e.g., health) in a particular way (i.e., temperately).

Peter Goldie neatly illustrates a story that highlights the contrasts between these various character types in a scenario he entitles *The Third Glass*: There is a work cocktail party where two glasses of champagne are taken to be the appropriate, or temperate, number of glasses that one should imbibe (Goldie 2004, 70-75).[25] When offered a third glass, the virtuous (temperate) person refuses and is not tempted to accept it. The intemperate person accepts and is not tempted to refuse. Then, there is the akratic and enkratic.[26] The former accepts the glass, she is weak-willed. The latter refuses, she is strong-willed. The weak-willed person is unable to defeat her desire for an additional glass. She has yet to develop the practical knowledge needed to successfully do so. The self-controlled person likewise knows that accepting the third glass is intemperate, intends to refuse it, but knows how to act on her judgment

[25]Goldie presents *weak-willed action* as acting against one's better judgement, so elaborations on intention and knowledge are my additions.

[26]Goldie also discusses the brutish, which I do not. Aristotle, Goldie's source material for these distinctions, has a sixth category also: the "godlike" which I will not be addressing. See Aristotle's *NE* VII.1; 1145a15-b20.

even though there remains a desire (and temptation) to accept it. She can, with effort, defeat her desire.

Though *The Third Glass* draws sharp lines distinguishing people—e.g., virtuous, strong-willed, etc.—I have come to see these personas as characterizations of particular stages along the path of moral development.[27] Thus, it seems to me that one moves from a non-virtuous stage to an akratic stage, then to an enkratic stage and final to virtue. She advances from one stage to another in similar, but different ways. When one utilizes temperance as her paradigm and begins as intemperate, she must come to aspire to become someone able to promote her own health, for example. Once she does aspire to value her health, she enters into the next character stage characterized by *akrasia*, someone who has begun the transformational process but is not yet able to do the things she wants to do. To move into the next stage characterized by self-control, she will need to learn how to overcome her recalcitrant practical attitudes in order to act for the promotion of her health. Finally, to transition from self-control to virtue, she will need to further eradicate her old habits supporting her old values (bodily pleasure gratification) and complete the formation of her new habits (now temperate) which support the promotion of her own health.

With these character types and stages in mind, we return again to the standard advice: if one is to acquire virtue, then the moral learner needs to be able to replicate the actions of virtuous people (do what they do). Thus, the idea is that as she continues to replicate these actions, she will habituate them and come to be as the

[27]I credit Myles Burnyeat for planting this seed in his classic essay, "Aristotle on Learning to Be Good" (1980, 69ff.). It seems this may not be Burnyeat's view of Aristotle's personas, but I have nevertheless extrapolated that idea from his essay.

virtuous person is. However, when one looks more closely at the moral progressor stages, it becomes apparent that the standard advice is actually incomplete and does not deliver what it promises. For instance, the weak-willed person, as *The Third Glass* illustrates, cannot refuse the third glass because she cannot defeat her desire for it. She literally cannot do as the virtuous does. Instead, she may have to avoid having the desire at all and so must not attend the office party altogether. What will not help her is to try harder; she has not formed the ability to resist. A virtuous person, however, would not handle the situation by avoiding it. In our example, she is not a teetotaler, but someone who can drink the appropriate amount of alcohol, occasion dependent, and no more (or less). The weak-willed apprentice might have to approach many situations in such a way. For example, to avoid the temptation of eating unhealthily, she might have to remove sweets from her house, avoid the breakroom when she knows there are donuts or bagels, and pack a lunch in order to avoid eating fast food. To avoid obsessing about one's weight, another person might have to remove the scale from his bathroom. The list goes on. These akratic learners cannot in the moment do as the virtuous person does. To avoid vice, they must make appropriate lifestyle arrangements.[28] Avoiding situations in which one might be unable to act virtuously is good. However, she will not learn to shape her desires in a virtuous manner by simply avoiding situations in which she might have them. Additionally, should she be unable to avoid such situations in the future, she will not

[28]This is one of the strategies Christian Miller discusses that has some empirical impact on our behavior. See the section entitled "Selecting Our Situations" in his (2018), 204-209.

be able to resist her desires. She is stuck, she cannot do as the virtuous does and she cannot practice in the manner of the virtuous person.

What is actually happening with the akratic person? A common generalization concerning the weak-willed condition is one's passions overcome her reason (*NE* VII.3, 1147b10-15). I believe this generalization reflects what one experiences, herself, when she fails to act the way she intends—e.g., when she accepts the third glass. While this generalization makes sense *prima facie*, it fails to adequately account for her failure to act on her intention because it does not capture the role of her own habituated beliefs, feelings, and desires (habituated practical attitudes) in preventing her from doing so. Thus, weak-willed action is when one's habituated practical attitudes present the third glass as good and desirable even though she has good reason to see it otherwise. Thus, uninterrupted, the weak-willed person's habituated practical attitudes cause her to attend to apparent (or lesser) goods such that her desires and emotions move her to take action to promote them. When she feels an urge to accept the glass, it is her felt desires and emotions, in that moment, that are working against any good reasons she might have to refuse it. Although she likely knows in some sense that she ought to attend to the actual or best good present, she does not know how to make these goods salient. Thus, her desires and emotions, governed by her old habits, prevent her from acting on her intention.[29] Therefore, the best that she can do is to avoid tempting situations. Such avoidance is

[29]Perhaps a charitable way to interpret Aristotle's (and others, like Annas) use of the standard advice is that they intend it to be applied to children who may not have yet these habituated feelings and desires. Thus, when we turn to adults who do, a different strategy is in order. Thanks to Rachel Singpurwalla for pointing this out.

surely good for her, and yet, it doesn't help her learn how to overcome those temptations when they are present. Thus, for some learners, those characterized as akratic, it seems that they cannot do what the virtuous person does.[30] Because the standard advice implies that if one is unable to practice virtue, she will not be able to habituate it, it is unclear how those who are weak-willed can progress morally and ever become virtuous if the standard advice, as is, remains the path.

What about strong-willed, or self-controlled, people who can refuse the third glass even though they are otherwise tempted to accept it? These learners can occasionally act generously, courageously, justly, or otherwise virtuously but they are not themselves virtuous. They, too, have habituated beliefs, feelings, and desires that they must overcome in order to act virtuously. To perform virtuous acts, these strong-willed, or self-controlled, apprentices must think differently than their habits direct them, but also differently than the virtuous person would think. Unlike the weak-willed, they can put themselves in tempting situations and replicate the action of the virtuous person. Unlike the virtuous person at the cocktail party, however, the merely self-controlled person is tempted to over-imbibe. To avoid drinking too much, she might have to offer herself a little morsel of the chocolate cake as a reward for refusing the glass. Or, she might bring to mind the social embarrassment she might experience when one of her co-workers has to help her get home that evening. These sorts of tactics may help her take virtuous action, but they fail to help her habituate the beliefs, feelings, and desires that are characteristic of the virtuous

[30]See Johnson (2003) 816-825 for similar kinds of cases.

person. In using these tactics, she is utilizing a reward that is extrinsic to the virtue of temperance to motivate and habituate action. That is, she isn't taking action because it promotes the goods relevant to temperance, e.g., health, and is instead habituating her desires to partake or avoid other goods, apparent or otherwise.[31]

Still, a virtuous person does not employ any of these tactics, for she does not desire the next glass of champagne and she is not motivated to take virtuous action because of chocolate cake bribes. However, the *enkratic* progressor must employ these mental gymnastics in order to resist her habituated practical attitudes and perform the virtuous action. While she still has these habituated practical attitudes which produce contrary desires and emotions to virtuous action, she has learned how to interrupt them. To successfully interrupt the desires and emotions proceeding from them, she shifts her attention such that she makes another good (or apparent good) salient. That is, instead of her desire to be gratified by the third glass, her attention shifts to her desire to avoid being embarrassed at the office tomorrow. She does not see having the appropriate amount to drink as a good in the same way that the virtuous person does, i.e., she sees it either as pleasure (gratification of desire) or as potential embarrassment and not as degrading her own health. In so attending to a different salient good, she is able to produce in herself the desire and emotion to act against her habits even though it falls short of acting in the manner of the virtuous person who would be avoiding the third glass in order to promote her health (or some other good).

[31]Charles Duhigg, in his book, *The Power of Habit*, offers this sort of tactic in order to short-circuit existing habits and build new ones. I am not taking issue with the effectiveness of such tactics to manage one's behavior, instead I take issue with the efficacy of such tactics to produce virtuous habits.

To summarize, the self-controlled person in *The Third Glass* is tempted to take the glass. Her habituated attitudes direct her to see the third glass as a good. However, when she shifts her attention, she is able to generate feelings and desires such that she can refuse it. Thus, even though the self-controlled person can perform the action, they cannot do it in the manner of the virtuous person. The virtuous person, first, will not see the third glass as good and second will not have to shift her attention in order to generate the appropriate desires and emotions—these will be present when she sees the third glass as something that hinders the good she wishes to promote. So, the self-controlled person practices virtuous action differently that the virtuous person performs such action. The self-controlled person is taking steps to modify and control her behavior, while failing to address the source of her behavior—her beliefs and values. Thus, she is habituating that virtuous action is good for its extrinsic rewards and not for the rewards proper to the virtuous action—the promotion of the appropriate good. Since these learners must practice performing the right action in a different manner than the virtuous person performs it, they will remain unable to act in the manner of the virtuous person. Here, too, the standard advice fails to be efficacious.

A Step in the Right Direction

Thus far, I've been interpreting "doing as the virtuous does" as both acting and acting in the particular manner of a virtuous person. The trouble is that acting in the manner of the virtuous person is not possible without having the beliefs and values of a virtuous person. To become a virtuous person, one must work to form the particular values out of which virtuous actions will naturally flow. Agnes Callard in

her book, *Aspiration: The Agency of Becoming*, provides a step forward, however small, from Aristotle's admonition to do as the virtuous person does (Callard 2018).[32] As Callard presents it, an aspirant is one who reasons proleptically, or *as if* she already possessed the value toward which she aspires. This is much like an aspirant attempting to emulate the virtuous exemplar, though with a subtle difference. The aspirant isn't trying to do as the person with virtuous values does, but to reason *as if* she had the values of the virtuous person. In Callard's terminology, aspirants are those who currently do not possess the preferences that they want to possess, but who want, or intend, to possess them. Because she does not yet possess the values toward which she aspires, an aspirant's (rational) decisions typically proceed from preferences that she is attempting to replace. For example, Lexi wants to value kindness to strangers and form a preference for acting so. However, she currently has no preference or desire to be kind to strangers, just an intention to develop them. So, as Lexi makes rational decisions (out of her current preferences), she will consistently not act out of kindness. In order for her to act rationally out of kindness, she needs to value or prefer to act so. In other words, kindness proceeds from her valuing, or preferring, it. Consequently, the aspirant must do two things to be both rational and act "out of" kindness. First, construct a second, idealized, group of preferences (which support kindness), then she must reason from this constructed group of value preferences in order to act from those preferences (e.g., kindness). In Callard's words, she must reason *as if* (proleptically) she already possessed them (Callard 2018,

[32]Callard is arguing for the rationality of agential change and does not specifically address the challenge that I have laid out. However, the framework she utilizes is one way to reinterpret what it is that a learner does in order to grow in virtue. It is in this respect that I treat her argument.

179ff).[33] As the process of aspiration progresses, the constructed value or values eventually replace her starting preference(s) and value(s) to becomes her actual one(s). She will cease needing to reason *as if* at this point and really be reasoning *from* her new value(s). At least, that is how Callard's story goes.

Callard's account points us in the right direction for developing virtues by focusing on values. However, she still offers little direction concerning how one actually comes to value what a virtuous person values. As I see it, Callard's account of reasoning *as if* one already had the virtuous values is another version of Aristotle's admonition to do as the virtuous does. As such, her account suffers from the same challenges we've discussed already. When one has formed an intention to become someone who values things differently, she will have to make constant provision to attend to the values to which she aspires in order to attempt to act from them. This provision includes avoiding situations that will overwhelm her attention. For instance, one can imagine that the thought of being kind to those around her could be overwhelmed in a number of situations like being hungry, cold, sick, or standing in line at the motor vehicle administration. Thus, she would need to avoid these situations.

More problematic is the aspirant who is able to act as if she had these aspired-to, constructed, values. It is clear that the value, itself, is not the motivation for the action. The aspirant, in virtue of being an aspirant, does not yet value the values to which she is aspiring. Rather, she must use some other desire to motivate herself to

[33]Contemporary work in educational psychology uses the language of self-schemas, but largely holds to Callard's view of moral transformation. See especially chapter 6 of Gibb's (2014) *Moral Development and Reality*, pp. 133-151.

act in accordance with her aspired-to values. For example, to be *that* kind of person or to *value* those sort of things. So, when the aspirant is acting out of a constructed preference to be generous, she isn't acting for the sake of generosity, but for the sake of something else. Like the Aristotelian apprentice, she needs to find another motivator in order to reason in the manner she wishes (*as if* she valued kindness). In other words, after she constructs her idealized values so that she can see what that kind of person would choose, she now has to generate (out of her actual values) the appropriate affections and desires to choose to act in such a manner. For example, one might desire to have the reputation of a generous person or to be admired by a particular person. Negative desires and affections might also be useful to act *as if* she valued generosity. For instance, she might act as if she were generous desiring to avoid the shame of acting miserly in public or to avoid some kind of guilt for not living up to one's own or another's expectations. Like, the champagne drinking enkratic, she must find some extrinsic motivation to act *as if* she values or prefers generosity instead of acting out of generosity or for the sake of it.

Neither avoiding situations or finding alternative preferences to motivate oneself are strategies that the virtuous person need employ. How, then, does one transition from reasoning *as if* she values generosity to actually reasoning from generosity, or for the sake of generosity? It the same problem faced by the standard advice; if she can't practice reasoning from generosity, how can she ever habituate reasoning in such a way? While Callard's discussion does not provide specific steps to develop virtue, it does offer a direction. Instead of considering virtuous action as the object of habituation for the apprentice, she considers one's rationally-come-by

values to be that object. The idea is that to act in a virtuous manner, the virtuous person reasons in a particular way—from particular values. If we assume a rational actor, one need only to learn to value (believe) the things that a virtuous person believes in order to reason (choose) from those values. The actions of a virtuous person, then, will flow naturally from her values. The implication is that we ought to consider how and what the virtuous person values, but we cannot do it merely through the behavior management examples we've seen so far.

II. The Practical Disciplines

The advice received from Aristotle, Callard and others—to do what the virtuous, or wise, person does (or reason as if one had her reasons)—appears to be good advice, generally, but if the advice is only applied to manage behavior, it will fail in the practical specifics. Of course, what moral progressors should want is to do what the virtuous person does and to do those things in the manner of the virtuous person, i.e., with the right practical attitudes. But to be able to perform these actions in the manner of the virtuous person, she will need to be as the virtuous person is. To become virtuous, then, one should aim to produce in herself and habituate the values, or values, from which virtue naturally proceeds. This aim is distinct from emulating the actions and from reasoning *as if* one already had the values. That approach is merely action or behavior management and does little to affect values. Therefore, apprentices need to employ strategies that manage and shape their desires and emotions in such a way that they attend to the goods around them like a virtuous person would attend to them. This is how the deficiency in the standard advice is corrected. Virtuous action proceeds from these shaped practical attitudes. As

important, though, is that the moral progressor will be habituating the values which will naturally produce such actions. However, developing these values is only part of practical solution. Mature moral progressors, in contrast to children, are not blank slates. They already have particular habituated practical attitudes and these states carry with them patterns of thought, feeling, and desire which obstruct the development of virtue and virtuous action. Thus, apprentices also will need to disrupt these old habits if they hope to reform or replace them.

Tactics for Virtue Formation

The knowledge of the practices employed to disrupt old and form new, virtuous, habits remains something of an open secret. Many traditions, religious and otherwise, are deeply concerned with character and virtue formation and have developed practical tactics and strategies to facilitate such. The early and late Hellenistic schools, for example, all had exercises designed to teach one how to attend to one's thinking, change its pattern, affect the emotional tones accompanying such thought, disrupt and modify desires emanating from it, and ultimately come to perceive, or see, things from different perspectives (Hadot 1995, 101). Similarly, the Christian tradition has developed many disciplines designed to re-form one's habits by affecting one's desires, emotions, and thoughts in order form new values. Both Greek and Roman practitioners and early Christians thought of these exercises as analogous to physical training or gymnastics (Hadot 1995, 102; 1 Tim 4:7). In athletic training, one performs specific drills, or exercises, to isolate and strengthen certain muscles or skills. There is a drill for training players in American Football, for instance, where players run through tires. The point of the drill is to isolate a

particular skill—keeping one's knees high while running—to train the players to automatically keep their knees up without having to attend to them. Once they have habituated such skill, they can, in the game, keep their knees high while running and so avoid being tackled. They can think about the field, where they are going, and the many other things happening around them, and not have to attend to what their bodies are doing—the body responds autotelically. Of course, this is the kind of automaticity is analogous to that enjoyed by the virtuous person.

These activities and practices vary widely and should be implemented with individual contexts in mind—i.e., not everyone needs to work on the same things, so some disciplines will be unnecessary or ineffective for particular people. These practices can be utilized not only to identify the feelings and desires for one's old habits in order to interrupt them, but also as a means to replace them with those the virtuous might have. There have been many ways of categorizing spiritual and moral disciplines. For our purposes, the most helpful way to do is to divide them, as Willard does, into Disciplines of Abstinence and Disciplines of Engagement (1988, 158). Disciplines of abstinence, while serving other purposes, are primary resources to undo unwanted habits. Some more common practices of abstinence that Willard includes are: solitude, silence, fasting,[34] frugality, chastity, secrecy, and sacrifice.

[34]One might think that these disciplines pose a challenge to my criticism of an akratic person as one who avoids temptation and therefore does not cultivate virtue. They do not. Fasting is practiced in a manner that denies the gratification of bodily pleasure in a particular area. For example, many people practice denying themselves chocolate or alcohol during the Lenten season. The idea is that when one experiences an impulse to have some chocolate, she treats it as a prompt to attend to some good, in the case of Lent, to identify with Christ's passion in preparation for Easter celebration. A similar purpose surrounds the Muslim season of Ramadan. One fasts during the day during this season in order to focus one's mind on the blessings of God.

Someone characterized by *akrasia* in one area might conduct a fast in another area in order to reorder the environment around herself and to exercise the "muscles" of self-control elsewhere. For example, if I have two glasses of wine every evening while watching reruns of *Friends* and I am

Each of these is aimed toward abstaining from something for some time in order to disrupt one patterns of thought, feeling, and desire. Disciplines of engagement, on the other hand, are primary resources to form new practical attitudes. Examples that Willard includes are: study, worship, celebration, service, prayer, fellowship, confession, and submission. Each of these is aimed toward engaging with others and the world in a particular way that builds appropriate patterns of thought, feeling, and desire.

Examples of Practice

To see how these might work, consider again our champagne-drinking co-worker. Once she has begun to transform, she will have developed an expectation or picture of what the virtuous person would do, but will not have developed the know-how to reliably act with self-control. When she sees the third glass, her body will have a physical response in the form of a desire to consume another glass and maybe other physical and affective responses—salivation, for instance. The felt desire is associated with the belief that the third glass is good and to be preferred over other available options. The challenge for the progressor in this stage is to become aware of the desire for what it is: unwanted and unhelpful to her intention to become virtuous. Her primary need here is to interrupt her habitual (re)action which is motivated by this desire. What she should not do is directly confront the desire—this usually has the effect of making the desire more palpable and more difficult to resist.

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having trouble giving up the wine, I can fast from watching *Friends* and instead exercise or read during that time. By disrupting habits that I can disrupt, I am growing in my ability to disrupt habits that I cannot now disrupt due to *akrasia*.

To interrupt the desire, she needs to change the way that she thinks about the champagne. In the moment, however, this is practically impossible.

Rehearsal

One strategy she may employ is rehearsal, a discipline used by the Stoics to contemplate, among other things, their own deaths and the deaths of those whom they held most dear. The idea is that they could moderate their emotions and desires beforehand by thinking about it. They weren't just thinking about death. They were thinking in specific ways about death, e.g., that it was a natural part of life and not evil in itself. Thus, when a death occurred, it would be expected, and the Stoic would be able to moderate her emotions well.[35] Think of the difference that one typically sees with those who have some time to process the eventual death of a terminally ill loved-one versus a sudden, unexpected death. With many terminally ill patients, their loved ones have time to work through and process the emotions and expectations they anticipate feeling—it is a rehearsal forced upon them by the situation. With rehearsal, therefore, one is able to rewire her patterns of thought concerning death so that she feels differently about it. She doesn't just change the how she reacts, she changes the source of her actions—her practical attitudes.

So, if we were to apply the practice of rehearsal to the third glass scenario, prior to the work event, the moral progressor characterized as akratic would think about how the third glass would make her feel terrible, maybe even what it would taste like—e.g., ash or something else distasteful. She could even imagine it as

[35]To study at the *Stoa*, one had to be sentenced to death…i.e., come to understand that she was mortal and would in fact die (as all humans do).

poison that would run through her body. Of course, the virtuous person wouldn't see the third glass as something that would taste like ash, but she would see it as undesirable and distasteful, so the progressor's rehearsal needs to bring to bear thoughts appropriate to her that would make the third glass distasteful and so undesirable—i.e., she needs to think about things that will cause her to mimic the emotions and desires of a virtuous person. So, when she is offered the third glass, even though her old practical attitudes are still operating and so her usual feelings will still be present, she will have a moment where she can recognize that she is operating out of her old attitudes and so have an opportunity to choose to bring to mind the thoughts rehearsed. When she does, those thoughts will generate the feelings and desires she needs to refuse the third glass. The more she enters into the discipline of rehearsal, the more often she will have the mental moment to choose her course of (re)action. As she continues to choose to embrace the thoughts that interrupt her previous habits, she will act more commonly with self-control.

Rehearsal is an interesting discipline because it is one of both abstinence and engagement. It is one of abstinence in that one must spend time apart from the situation being rehearsed, usually in solitude, in order to understand and identify the cue. This step is needed in order to help her notice when her old practical attitudes are moving her to act against her intention to do otherwise. Without being able to recognize the operation of these old practical attitudes, our champagne loving co-worker wouldn't even notice that she has an opportunity to decide to refuse the third glass. So, once she is able to identify this situation, she can work to replace her emotions and desires typically caused by it. Here, rehearsal becomes a discipline of

engagement. Our friend must learn to identify the appropriate practical attitudes through studying the virtuous person and then find tactics to generate them within herself. Notice how it is the practical attitudes that this strategy is addressing and not the actual behavior. Rehearsal also isn't a tactic used to overpower her desire for the third-glass by offering a reward she desires more. Rehearsal goes to the source of the behavior.

Secrecy

Secrecy is another age-old discipline, one of abstinence. Though it can be a religious practice, it need not be tied to any specific tradition, religious or otherwise. This discipline breaks unhealthy patterns of honor and praise-seeking. It is particularly useful for moral progressors whose identities are tied to the opinions of others, who value their own actions based upon the praise of others, or those who mistakenly seek approval or validation from others. This pattern of thought, feeling, and desire is a stumbling block for those seeking to grow in virtue because through it, one habituates doing virtuous actions for the sake of being praised or honored. However, the virtuous person does the virtuous action for the sake of the good promoted. Praise and honor are extrinsic to the virtuous action, depending upon another noticing and responding in particular ways to one's virtuous action. So, while the praise and honor and associated with the virtuous act, it isn't a necessary component of it. Thus, when one seeks the honor that may come from another noticing her virtuous action, she is attending to something the virtuous act gets her and not attending to the good she is promoting. When people seek praise and honor, they typically take extra steps to make their actions publicly known or at least

available to be known. In these cases, when their actions remain hidden, they might become frustrated that others are not noticing their good deeds or contributions.

Keeping one's praiseworthy actions secret is one way to combat the desire for praise and the actions one might take to get such praise. Choosing to keep one's accomplishments or actions secret—or even taking steps to keep one's accomplishments unknown (absent deceit)—accomplishes a number of things in the life of the moral aspirant. First, by choosing to keep some praiseworthy action secret, one's desire to have that action known is revealed. Thus, this discipline can be a diagnostic tool for the aspirant revealing another or a deeper motivation for her actions. Secondly, it starves one's desires for praise by denying others the opportunity to give it. In practicing this discipline, one not only withholds knowledge of her good deeds, but also takes steps to bring to mind the good that her actions have promoted. It is this good that she should desire and so by practicing attending to it rather than the praise she might receive for promoting it, she can not only starve her desire for praise, but replace it with desires more in line with the values she is seeking to form. Another result of practicing this discipline is that one cannot rightly expect others to notice her good deeds if she is taking steps to keep them hidden. Thus, she will also lose the expectation that others should notice and honor her. By changing this expectation, she no longer will be frustrated by others who fail to notice her good deeds and so she will cease to condemn them for such failures. When one no longer desires or acts for the sake of recognition, she is free, first, to enjoy the virtuous act for the good that it promotes and, secondly, she is free to receive honor

appropriately—as justly deserved—with gratitude that one's actions are impacting others for good.

Prayer

An explicitly religious practice of engagement is prayer. In a broadly Judeo-Christian tradition, prayer as a discipline of engagement is most often intercessory prayer, i.e., advocating for another by asking God to promote various goods in that other person's life. This kind of action elevates the dignity, personhood, and agency of others in the mind of the praying person. Thus, prayer shapes one's beliefs (and so desires and feelings) with respect to other people. As such, it is helpful to reorient any false or bent practical attitudes one has with respect for other people—e.g., holding others in contempt for differing views on a political issue, a profession she finds silly or pointless, being of another ethnic, political, or economic background, or more subtly, viewing another as a tool or means to advance in her career, to gratify one's sexual desires, or merely as a faceless servant present only to meet one's needs. For instance, if one has a problem with lusting after others, one way to interrupt and reform such a vice is to employ prayer. Lusting is distinct from a recognition of beauty or even a desire to come to know another person. It is the specific urge to gratify one's desire with the object of lust. The object of lust is merely a means to gratify one's desires. Thus, when one attends to another person with lust, she is not really attending to them as a person at all, but as an instrument to gratify herself. So, assuming that she has formed an intention to address this vicious way of seeing (and perhaps treating) others, she could pray. She asks God to bless (act in his power for the good of) this person. She could, for example, pray that they would experience the

love and safety of being in healthy relationships with their parents, friends, and significant others. These are specific goods that are human and attached to persons and their dignity. It is extremely hard to imagine another as the object to gratify one's desires while simultaneously praying for the many things that elevates his or her personhood in one's mind. Practicing prayer in this kind of situation trains one to see others in a way that honors their dignity and personhood rather than as instruments to gratify desire. If one is unable to enter into this discipline in the moment, she may have to first practice rehearsal or perhaps practice prayer for those after whom she has already lusted.

Friendship

Lastly, a practice of fellowship or community aiming at virtuous friendship is nearly essential to virtue development. The mere fact that one's practical attitudes are nearly all directed toward others both in and apart from her wider community testify to the importance of interacting with others. The many human traditions and philosophers (e.g., Plato, Aristotle, the later Hellenists, Confucians, Christians, Buddhists, et al.) who are concerned with virtue development also testify that virtues are best—and perhaps necessarily—formed in communities that are collectively concerned with virtue. One's community provides and establishes the starting points for norms of behavior (i.e., values of the community like honoring the dead), for identifying the form that some virtues take (e.g., how one honors the dead, etc.), and for institutionally or ritually pointing one toward excellence (or failing to do so) and away from vice (or failing to do so). Thus, one can be a member of a community that hinders growth in virtue or in one that catalyzes it. The practice of friendship is the

intentional pursuit and establishment of a community that catalyzes growth in virtue. At a minimum, she will need to arrange her life to be able to intentionally and thoughtfully enter into activities, like those already discussed, which disrupt old habits of thought, belief, feeling, and desire and which encourage the pursuit of forming new ones.[36] Those who are friends to her will be those who support such efforts. If she is surrounded by those who will hinder such efforts, she will need to distance herself from them in appropriate ways—physically, emotionally, etc. For those who have severely mal-formed habits, like addictions, completely removing themselves from their "old" life might be appropriate and inpatient rehabilitation centers are often a needed environmental change where the interruption of old habits can be more easily undertaken.

Nevertheless, to practice friendship, one should diligently work to establish what Karen Stohr calls "moral neighborhoods" (2019, 125ff.). Good moral neighborhoods provide their members with mutual accountability, encouragement, and an expectation of diligence toward growth in virtue and the elimination of vice. They can do this because each of the members are dedicated to being friends to the others. One who promotes another's good, primarily her growth in virtue, is her friend. So, to be a friend in this manner, is to work for and promote another's good.[37]

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[36]Communities of support, like 12-step programs understand the importance of peer accountability and of rearranging one's social patterns. These programs might appear as if they are merely behavior management systems (i.e., external impositions on desire, etc.), they focus on the beliefs, affections, and desires which produce the impulse to gratify desire with some kind of harmful substance/action. Of note, to break addiction, behavior management in the form of removing someone from their social environment completely might be necessary at first.

[37]Aristotle, the Stoics, the ancient Christians all had this idea in mind with respect to friendship. The Greek word translated as "friend", *philon*, literally translates to "beloved" or "beloved one". See *NE* IX.9, 1169b28-1170a4; *Epist.*, 109.1; and John 15:12.

This discipline of friendship is distinct from normal virtuous activity. There is among friends such as these, an expectation that the others will promote one's own good—primarily one's growth in virtue. This expectation arises from a clear commitment (explicit or tacit) to love one another as friends. There is no such expectation (or perhaps one is mistaken to expect such) from most others—who have not made such a commitment. Of course, those pursuing virtue will try to be a friend to everyone regardless of whether he has committed to being her friend because she is in the business of promoting the various human goods of those with whom she is in contact.

Practices for the moral life need not always be established ones like rehearsal, secrecy, prayer, and friendship.[38] They can be everyday things. If one has a problem with road rage—getting angry and impatient in traffic because of how other drivers are acting—and aspires to become a more patient, less angry driver, for example—she can intentionally drive in the slow lane or maybe restrict herself to driving the speed limit. Then, she must explicitly address her thought pattern and connect it to why she is driving in the slow lane, changing it from something like "I'm the most important person on the road and my agenda is more important than everyone else's" to "I'm not the most important person on the road, so I'll let those who have more important things to do drive around me". After thoughtful practice (planning ahead, etc.), one can come to experience the reality of not being the most important person on the road and so greatly diminish the number of rage incidents she has. Surely, rehearsal and prayer could also help with road-rage and perhaps should be employed

[38]One can find the more established patterns in many places. Some can be found in Hadot's *Philosophy as a Way of Life* (1995), Willard's *Spirit of the Disciplines* (1988), and Ricard's *Happiness* (2003).

as well, but there are many ways to interrupt old habits concerning practical attitudes. The key is to avoid addressing the behavior directly and instead addressing the source of it. The behavior should become the natural product of the re-formed practical attitudes.

III. Conclusion

The advice to do as the virtuous person does can be good advice so long as one is clear on that to do what the virtuous person does the moral progressor needs to learn to be as the virtuous person is. The virtuous person has focused on forming the elements—beliefs, feelings, and desires—which underlie virtuous action. Virtuous action, then, will proceed naturally from a person in such a state. The task of the progressor, therefore, is to habituate thinking, feeling, and desiring what the virtuous person believes, feels, and desires. If the progressor focuses on habituating action at the expense of habituating her practical attitudes, she will remain essentially how she is. This, of course, is the danger of the standard advice to do as the virtuous person does. It invites progressors merely to manage their behaviors and while she may be able to manage her behavior in many situations, she will continually run up against situations that upset her delicately balanced behavior management system, and more importantly, she will fail to become virtuous, which requires acting from the right practical attitudes.

Chapter 3: Moral Resilience: Inoculating Against Moral Injury

It is now widely recognized that the United States is facing a suicide crisis among its military veterans. More military members since 9/11 have died from suicide than from combat (Hernandez 2021). Combat Stress (CS) and Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) are common risk factors and are considered highly correlative, if not causal, factors to the suicides themselves. A less well-known risk factor for these suicides is moral injury, which is an injury to one's character that occurs in response to a perceived or actual injustice. Consider Joey Schiano's story. In 2010, during Joey's second deployment with the Marine Corps to Afghanistan, his platoon was attacked from a nearby compound. At a certain point, he responded by launching a rocket into the building. After the Taliban fighters fled, the Marines searched the compound to find a number of women and children destroyed by the blast of the rocket. David Wood summarizes Joey's response:

> [He] just broke down sobbing…. For Joey Schiano, it was a classic moral injury. Using a SMAW [the rocket] to try to stop the gunfire pinning the Marines down was tactically correct and allowed under every international law and U.S. military doctrine. It was a military necessity. In the words of President Obama, Joey's commander in chief back in Washington, it was "morally justified." But the moral burden, the image of those bloody innocents, the guilt, the shame—the inescapable truth of what he had done—that's what Joey evidently took away from Afghanistan. …One image in particular haunted him: he was convinced that the rocket he had fired had gone through the head of one of the children (Wood 2016, 103, 110).

Joey was haunted by a particular image of a child whose head had been hit by a rocket—clearly a grave injustice. He blamed himself and took on the guilt and shame of this injustice. After returning home, Joey eventually succumbed to the trauma he endured due to the moral enormity of his actions ending his life in suicide.

The term "moral injury" has only recently been coined, but the phenomenon has been present as long as war (Shay 1994). It is tempting to think of moral injury as an aspect or additional feature of posttraumatic stress (PTS). But, in fact, post-traumatic stress and moral injury are distinct in various ways and can occur separately (though often, they co-occur). First, PTS is considered a victim-diagnosis.[39] It can be applied formally only to individuals suffering from the reception of a harm, like serious life-threats, severe injury or maiming, sexual assault, etc. Certain kinds of moral injury, viz., those caused by witnessing or perpetrating a moral crime, do not conform to this formal model for PTS. Second, the primary injury when one is damaged morally is distinct from that of PTS. A primary symptom of PTS is that one has lost any sense of safety. One suffering from PTS does not feel safe in the world. A primary symptom of moral injury, however, is not a loss of safety, but a loss of trust—in one's own ability to act in morally good ways or that the world is moral—i.e., that there is actually good (and evil) in the world. Those suffering from it (and not PTS) generally do not feel physically unsafe; instead, they don't trust themselves or the world to be good. Third, as one would think, the symptoms of PTS and moral injury look correspondingly different. The loss of safety associated with PTS results in symptoms of fear, anxiety, and feeling constantly threatened. In contrast, moral injury's loss of trust leads one to struggle with anger, guilt, and shame: a person can be angry at their (perceived) inability to act in morally good ways or to trust others to

[39]There is a distinction between PTS and PTSD, one can experience PTS after trauma, but is able to heal from it before it becomes a disorder. However, I use the terms synonymously throughout as my argument does not appeal to or depend upon this distinction.

act well; and they can feel guilt and shame for their actions and inactions or as a result of being betrayed.

Despite the fact that the phenomena are distinct, moral injury is not considered a clinical diagnosis for psychologists to treat. This is because psychological studies have yet to identify a "universally applicable paradigmatic definition of the outcomes uniquely putatively associated with exposure to potential morally injurious events [PMIEs]" (Litz, et al. 2019, 344). As a result, psychologists treat moral injury using the same methods as used to treat PTS. However, to be healed from one diagnosis is not to be healed from the other: as I will argue, a moral injury requires a moral cure.

My aim in this paper is to provide a theoretical understanding of moral injury and repair that can be used in practice to develop moral resilience, a way to bounce back or recover from PMIEs in a way that avoids moral injury. I first provide an account of how moral injury literally undoes one's character. To understand how to help Marines (and other combatants) like Joey Schiano, one first has to understand what has been injured. Second, I provide an account of how someone like Joey might undergo moral repair—how the undoing of his character might be interrupted and reversed. Here, I address injuries like Joey's, but also moral injuries where one is the recipient of a moral harm and not the (actual or apparent) perpetrator. Third, I identify the manner in which some soldiers avoid moral injury even when exposed to PMIEs. These soldiers respond to PMIEs in an excellent, or virtuous, manner that avoids moral injury. They respond with moral resilience. Cultivating moral resilience involves cultivating the virtue of justice, for the morally resilient person

correctly perceives whether an injustice has occurred and takes the proper steps to address the injustice. Lastly, I discuss a few ways that the military institution can support the development of the virtue of moral resilience.

I. The Phenomenon of Moral Injury

Moral Injury, Its Causes and Nature

Moral injury, itself, is caused by one's response to an occurrence of injustice—a PMIE. PMIEs are usually divided into three categories of events: those where one perpetrates a moral crime, those where one witnesses or comes to learn about a moral crime, and those where one is the recipient of a moral crime. Each of these kinds of PMIEs can be an actual or merely apparent moral crime. One can be just as injured when she believes she has been betrayed, but hasn't, as when she actually has been. Thus, the injury does not only originate from the PMIE, but also from one's perception of the PMIE and her response to it. While it seems clear why those who believe they have perpetrated or are the recipient of a moral crime might respond to PMIEs in a way that results in moral injury, the cases of moral injury in response to witnessing a PMIE are less so. When we consider what witnesses (near or far) come to believe about themselves and others, though, I think we can categorize them as either instances where one is the perpetrator (or apparently so) or the recipient (or apparently so). For example, when a person believes (rightly or wrongly) that she is somehow responsible for the moral crime that others, perhaps thousands of miles away, perpetrated, we should consider her injury as if she were the perpetrator. Contrariwise, when a person witnesses her superiors or fellow soldiers committing a moral crime and feels betrayed by them, we should consider her injury

as if she were the recipient of a crime. Thus, for my analysis, it seems best to limit moral injury to two broad categories. The first is when one perpetrates a moral crime betraying herself and perhaps others. The second is when one is the recipient of a moral crime, specifically a betrayal. These two categories are inclusive of both actual and apparent moral transgressions.

Since it is an injury, it is useful to consider what we know about physical and mental injuries. With respect to matters of health, including therapeutic treatment, the mind and the body are both understood teleologically. That is, there are more-or-less clearly understood ways in which they function—and ways in which they dysfunction. So, when the body or mind breaks, there exist specialists who can, in usual circumstances, determine the cause of injury, identify remedies, and possibly effect repairs to some degree or another. Injuries to one's moral character should be likewise considered. Thus, from the framework of virtue ethics, one's character has a knowable way in which it functions healthily and in which it flourishes. Like the body and mind, one's character can be injured or maimed, and like with ailments of the body and mind, one can come to understand the cause of such ailments and identify corresponding remedies. So, when one's character is injured, we should be able to effect moral repairs to some degree.

The Unraveling of Character

I largely follow David Luban in considering moral injury to involve, as physical injury does, the following three components: pain, loss of functionality, and disfigurement (Luban forthcoming, 3). Luban provides good, concrete examples which illuminate the pain, loss of moral function, and disfigurement that are common

among soldiers returning from war with moral injury. In this section, I describe his view and then fill out his analogy to physical injury by illuminating the ways in which moral injury disrupts and reverses moral development. In doing so, I will be able to explain not only how moral repair restores one's ability to progress in moral development, but also how one might take steps to lower the probability of incurring an injury in the first place.

Let us discuss each of the three components in turn, beginning with pain. For moral progressors,[40] the usual initial reaction to a PMIE is an experience of emotional or existential pain. This pain typically takes the form of guilt and shame, but it can also include anger, feelings of worthlessness, and a sense of moral nihilism (Shay 1994, 19-20; Litz, 2009, 698-99; Luban forthcoming, 3). Luban does not mention this, but it should be stressed that when moral transgressions are committed, guilt and shame are likely helpful emotions, alerting the moral agent to the fact (or possibility) that an injustice has occurred. Pain plays a similar role in physical injuries—i.e., it alerts the person that something has gone wrong with the body. Thus, pain in many cases is instrumentally good. It can become bad, however, when one cannot heal the underlying cause to rid themselves of it. Instead, a person must either numb the pain or cope with it in other ways. Emotional and existential pain are the same—often instrumentally good. One *should* feel guilt and perhaps shame for harming another and so become aware of an injustice requiring attention. Thus, in response to a PMIE, experiencing emotional and existential pain may be a perfectly appropriate. It is when one cannot or does not appropriately address or repair the underlying

[40]Those who are neither vicious nor virtuous, but somewhere in between.

injustice that the pain resulting from the PMIE becomes problematic. When left untreated, the emotional pain can result in beliefs of personal worthlessness and a loss of belief in the moral order of the universe (Shay 1994, 32-35; Luban forthcoming, 3). It is then that emotional and existential pain become something more like chronic suffering. This pain, continuing from an unresolved injustice, is symptomatic of moral injury and not merely an awareness or signpost of an injustice.

The second feature of moral injury is loss of moral function. According to Luban, loss of moral function takes the following forms: loss of agency (the power to act), an erosion of moral judgment or practical wisdom, and an inability to act in ways that promote one's own flourishing. He gives paradigmatic examples of each: a returned warrior unable to leave his home, the inability to trust those who are actually trustworthy, and self-medicating with destructive behavior such as heavy drinking or drug use (Luban forthcoming, 4). Finally, moral injury can include disfigurement, or personality changes that make the person repellent, strange, and difficult. As an example, someone might regularly explode in fury without significant provocation.

Luban does not give an explanation for how one's response to PMIEs results in loss of moral functionality. I believe that Agnes Callard's account of value transformation, aspiration, provides insight. According to Callard, value transformation occurs when one imagines herself as someone already possessing the aspired-to values and attempts to reason from these values (Callard 2018). As one continually chooses to reason from this constructed version of herself—or reason *as if* she were already that person—she transforms her present values into those to which

she aspires. The emotional and existential pain associated with a PMIE can interfere with this aspirational process. More specifically, since the emotional and existential pain associated with the PMIE can include, or proceed from, the belief that one is worthless and not to be trusted to do moral good in the world, or in moral nihilism, she cannot enter into this aspirational process. She cannot imagine herself as the kind of person that can be good and do good things in the world; she cannot, that is, imagine herself as someone with moral values such as the importance of benefiting others or of justice. Without being able to imagine herself as that aspired-to person, she cannot build and maintain a picture of herself from which to reason and toward which to grow. Thus, one who is suffering moral injury cannot aspire to become a morally virtuous person, or even just a better one, because she cannot see, or imagine, herself as that kind of person.

This account can explain why moral injury unravels character. It isn't only that one cannot imagine herself as more virtuous such that she can aspire and continue to grow to be a better human. I think it is that she cannot but see herself as something worse than she is. Thus, the aspiration is retrograde. She operates from the beliefs and preferences she imagines her worse self to have. So, she isn't reasoning from her dominant evaluative perspective, but the evaluative perspective she perceives herself to have, viz., one in which she is indifferent to the good of others or unworthy of receiving goods from others. Thus, she is gradually changing her automatic reactions to be those of person who is morally worse than who she currently is. One can understand, therefore, how moral injury often results in what Shay calls the "undoing of character" and what Luban refers to as the loss of moral

function. One doesn't stop having an image of herself due to moral injury, she has just changed that image. Now, she cannot imagine herself as a good or virtuous person. Instead, she imagines herself as a person who does not value and act for the good of others and so ought to be ashamed and guilt-ridden because of who she perceives herself to be and what she sees herself to have done; she sees herself as worthy of the punishment and retribution deserved by moral transgressors and reprobates or else unworthy of inclusion into the broader moral community that has ostracized her (or at least she believes it has). So, whatever habits of moral excellence she might have possessed will erode as she acts from a preference set of a moral reprobate, gradually unmaking whatever character she had previously been able to establish.

I should stress that I do not want to deny that it is appropriate to feel negative emotions as a result of committing a moral transgression. As we will see, perceiving an actual moral transgression as a moral transgression is an important step in recovering from moral injury or avoiding it altogether. So, I don't dispute the appropriateness of these emotions to alerting someone to the fact that she has morally transgressed. However, guilt and shame are negative evaluative attitudes that, while perhaps necessary and appropriate short-term evaluations of one's action, need to be replaced, treated, and resolved to stop someone from feeling that she is beyond redemption, thus leading her character to degrade even further. In short, feeding and perpetuating these feelings leads to continued emotional suffering, dysfunction, and disfigurement. Instead of providing fodder for these feelings, one ought to pursue appropriate moral repair.

To summarize, because a morally injured person believes herself to be bad, she can no longer construct a more moral version of herself from which she can reason and act and toward which she can aspire. At best, her residual reactions and habits will sustain her for a while. However, as she continues to act out of this degraded self-perception and value set, she will continually lose confidence in her ability to effect justice or any other kind of goodness. Because she can no longer imagine herself as a good person, she will be unable to maintain the practical attitudes—beliefs, feeling, and desires—that have to this point maintained her good moral habits. Thus, her good habits will likewise erode, and as they do she will lose more and more power to act in practically wise and good ways. One who is morally injured suffers emotional pain, is morally dysfunctional, and is on the road to moral disfigurement. She cannot trust herself or the world with moral matters. She has become incapable of moral progression in terms of virtue and character. Likely, she has begun retrograde progression, undoing the virtue and character that she had previously formed.

II. Moral Repair

Two primary tasks remain: how one might repair moral injury and how one might prevent it in the first place. This section addresses the first task, specifying how one might interrupt the unravelling of character and restore proper moral function. For the moral agent, a restoration of function includes a restoration of agency, moral judgment, and the ability to promote one's own flourishing. I acknowledge that individuals will need to apply the following, general account to the very specific aspects of their unique characters that require repair. I give a general

account of moral repair for each of the two broad categories of moral injury, beginning with injuries resulting from one's own commission of a moral crime followed by an account of injuries incurred where one is the recipient of a moral crime, specifically a betrayal. In both cases, since the root cause of the injury is moral in nature, the repair required is also moral in nature (Sherman 2015, 12).

Moral Repair for Those Injured by Their Own Transgression

David Luban offers a version of moral repair for moral transgressors modeled after the community practices of atonement found in the Talmudic tradition as presented by Maimonides.[41] There are four steps. First, an individual transgressor confesses publicly; second, she repents of her transgressions (resolves not to do again what she has done); third, she must give some kind of reparation for the transgression; and, finally, she must apologize. These final two steps are both necessary as an apology without some form of payment is empty and payment without an apology is mercenary and remorseless. Once these four steps have been followed, the moral community (including those wronged) is able to forgive and restore (Luban forthcoming, 9-13).

Luban's presentation of atonement's purpose and role in moral repair for the transgressor is an extremely helpful frame to enter more deeply into how one first interrupts the unraveling of virtue and then restores proper function. I take atonement to refer to a transgressor taking action to restore a just, or rightly ordered, relationship

[41]In addition to Luban, other accounts or strategies for moral repair that address injuries caused by different moral harms can be found in the collection of essays in *Bulletproofing the Psyche* (Thomas and Albright 2018) and in Nancy Sherman's *Untold War* (2010) and *After War* (2015).

with those she has wronged and also with the broader community or communities involved.[42] When this work is done, her broken trust—trust in her own ability to be good and to act in morally good ways —can be restored. The practical culmination of atonement for the individual, then, is a restoration of her capacity to aspire. The process of atonement also serves as a means to reestablish trust in others and to establish one's own trustworthiness in the eyes of the community such that it is possible for her to reenter that community as a full moral participant. When others see her as good, she will be able to see herself as good as well.

While I largely agree with Luban's account, I modify and expand it to overcome two of its limitations. First, Luban divides the four steps into two phases—the individual (repentance and confession) and the communal (reparation and apology) (Luban forthcoming, 14). I do not think this distinction is a helpful one because I don't think repentance and confession occur in isolation from the community. Second, Luban's account only covers cases where one has committed a moral transgression. It does not cover cases where one thinks one has committed a moral transgression but in fact has not, i.e., apparent transgression.

I believe that moral repair comes in two phases. I consider the first phase of moral repair to be one of perception.[43] (As I will point out in the next section, this phase is similar for both general categories of moral injury (those of perpetrator and recipient) as well as the instances within each category that are merely apparent.)

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[42]Robert Roberts says something like this when discussing the virtue of justice. Namely, that forgiveness—the culmination of putting things right—is a component of the virtue of justice. See (Roberts 2013, 192).

[43]Luban's first two elements of atonement (confession and repentance) as well as Sherman's "self-empathy" would align with or fit into this phase.

During the perceptual phase, the injured reconsiders the PMIE and her role in the event. Often this is done in a group setting with others who were present or with trusted counselors. Then, as she reconsiders the PMIE in light of what others also perceive, she can come to see the event more clearly and in line with the broader moral community. As she does so, it is important that she voices her agreement with the broader moral community regarding the moral facts surrounding the PMIE.[44] At this point, the injured can assess whether a real moral transgression occurred or whether it was merely apparent. If it was really a transgression, then along with her community she must come to appropriately understand her culpability and then move into the next phase, which I label "restoration."

So, in the perceptual phase, one rethinks her understanding of certain events—particularly whichever PMIE confronts her—and comes into (more or less) public agreement with moral reality—and the broader moral community—concerning her understanding of events. For instance, consider the following case:

> Sgt. Rob Sarra, U.S.M.C. was part of first wave of marines and soldiers entering Iraq during the U.S. invasion in 2003. In a *Frontline* interview he recounts an event that still haunts him. Standing guard duty at a checkpoint, he observed what appeared to be an Iraqi woman, completely covered by a burka, approaching the checkpoint. After numerous attempts to get her to stop approaching the checkpoint, he shot her. Recent enemy tactics had included suicide bombers wearing concealed vests entering checkpoints, detonating the bomb, and killing and wounding Americans. However, in Sgt. Sarra's case, it turned out to be an innocent woman, a non-combatant. Though he adhered to all appropriate procedures and he was legally cleared by an investigation into the shooting, Sgt. Sarra feels guilty and ashamed, like he cannot trust himself to act in morally good ways. He says in the interview that he wasn't going to

[44]Alcoholics Anonymous and other recovery organizations make a practice of this kind of confession because of its efficacy. I think it is helpful to understand the original meaning of "repent" and "confess" as it eliminates any ritualistic aspects that Western culture has associated with these words. Repent merely means to re-think. The Greek is *metanoeto* which merely means to change one's mind. The Greek word *homologeo* which we translate as "confess" literally means "to come into agreement" or "to agree".

> tell anyone back home about this—his mother shouldn't have to know that he is a murderer (*Frontline* 2005, minutes 1:35-5:31).

Sgt. Sarra could change his mind regarding his killing of the innocent woman. Through the perceptual phase of moral repair, he could come to see it, not as murder, but instead as an unfortunate, but justified harm.[45] In fact, the broader moral community recognizes it as such and could help him come see this fact. This phase of moral repair also can be applied in cases where one witnesses a crime and believes themselves to be the perpetrator, like Staff Sgt. Lauzier:

> In 2006, two of Staff Sgt. Eric Lauzier's squad members participated in the brutal rape and murder of an Iraqi girl and the subsequent murder of her family to cover up their crime. During this event, Staff Sgt. Lauzier was home on leave and the true story of the events of that night didn't become known to him for months. Nevertheless, Lauzier blames himself. He doesn't believe that he fought hard enough with the platoon sergeant to procure more experienced soldiers who could mentor and supervise the inexperienced ones. He knew that he was the one who was holding them together, morally. He gives an example of a patrol through town early in the deployment where he had overheard one of the soon-to-be assailants specifically remark about raping a couple of the local girls. Lauzier forcefully shut down the conversation, but he knew what was in their minds and that they were capable of rape and maybe more. He thinks that he could have prevented the rape and murders had he been present in Iraq during that time. He was half a world away and yet feels shame and guilt and believes that he is morally culpable for not having prevented it. He was medically retired in 2008 for "combat stress", has become reclusive, and drinks himself to sleep every night (Hernandez 2014a, 2014b).[46]

It should be clear that Staff Sgt. Lauzier is not morally culpable for the described events and while it may be true that he could have taken different, perhaps better, actions in disciplining his squad and requesting help, he is not culpable for failing to

[45]I do not mean to convey that he can just flip a switch and think differently. He would have to resolve himself to change the way he thinks and implement sound practical techniques in community in order to do so.

[46]The story of this event and others is brilliantly told in Jim Frederick's *Black Hearts: One Platoon's Descent into Madness in Iraq's Triangle of Death*.

prevent some of his squad members from raping and murdering. Properly approached, then, the perceptual phase could change his self-understanding, bringing it into alignment with the understanding held by the broader moral community. From here, he could begin to perceive himself as good person again, an essential step to restore his agency, moral judgment, and ability to act for his own flourishing. The strategy is to bring his thoughts and beliefs into alignment with what the rest of the moral community knows—that he isn't responsible for these events.

This first phase of moral repair brings the morally injured to see their crime(s) in one of two ways. First, as properly attributed, necessitating entering further into the process of moral repair. Second, as mis-attributed. The restorative phase, the second part of moral repair for transgressors, proceeds in different directions depending upon the needs of the injured person determined during the previous phase. When there is a moral transgression, the individual needs to make things right, to restore justice. However, if one has come to see that there has been no transgression, then the individual must seek or accept vindication from her moral community. Thus, the restorative phase focuses on restoring the individual to the moral community, which is crucial for moral function, in part because viewing oneself as a member of the moral community allows one to see herself as good. First, we will address how a transgressor can make things right.

If after rethinking and coming into agreement with one's broader moral community, one has confirmed or has come to admit her own culpability, she has positioned herself to address her moral transgression(s) by continuing the process of moral repair. Many may perceive their transgression without a prolonged perceptual

phase and perhaps even immediately after acting. Others take far longer. Even so, going through the process of reconsidering and sharing one's experience with others is still useful to clarify why one committed the transgression, the depth and scope of the reparation needed, and to publicly admit to and concur with one's moral community that a transgression has occurred for which she is culpable. Once the transgression is clearly assessed, the individual can enter into the restorative phase; here, I follow Luban in emphasizing reparation and apology. First, reparation involves paying back the injured party. In the case of wrongful death, the reparation would involve the deceased living relatives and those who depended upon her. As Luban points out, however, this kind of reparation can be practically difficult for a normal servicemember to perform due to physical distance (Luban forthcoming, 11). There may be other reasons why one cannot make direct amends to the families of those whom one has harmed. So, many times reparation must take a symbolic form. Charitable works, serving others, and if possible finding the injured parties to make amends are possible ways. These kinds of good works may never have the precise effect of repairing that which was broken, but they do serve as a kind of vicarious penance, or payment, for the wrong done. Of course, the larger the transgression, the larger the debt of reparation. Major offenses will no doubt have legal ramifications and institutional means to derive reparation, like imprisonment, expulsion from the armed services, loss of benefits, etc., however, reparations need to be moral and so demand an intentional decision by an individual and not a punishment imposed upon her.

Alongside reparation, moral repair for a transgressor requires an apology. Apology is simply a request to the injured party to no longer hold the transgression against the transgressor. It is requesting forgiveness—an acknowledgement that the injured party will not pursue further retribution or hold the transgressor culpable any longer. This may coincide with reparation, though it need not. The best case will always involve full restoral of relationship, whatever that may look like. However, there need be no reconciliation in order for forgiveness to be granted. One can be forgiven, or be released from the pursuit of retribution, without coming to have a new or re-established relationship. In some cases, it even may be possible to complete moral repair even when forgiveness is not granted. For instance, the Rabbinic tradition holds that when forgiveness is not granted after many attempts to apologize, the sin (guilt of the transgression) transfers to the unforgiving party and atonement (the process of restoring justice) is complete for the original transgressor (Luban forthcoming, 12). In the case of many service members, moral repair must be completed without receiving forgiveness from the party against whom one transgressed. Even so, a collective judgement from one's community that justice has been reestablished, that the transgression has been repaid, and that forgiveness is warranted is psychologically important and morally necessary for moral repair. It is crucial for moral repair that one be reconnected to the larger community in which her welfare is rooted. Such a process of reintegration reverses the alienation experienced by the injured and brings them again to feel at home again in the world (Sherman 2021, 108-9). Moreover, one needs to see herself as worthy of being a member of the

(moral) community. Thus, supportive friendships and groups are nearly indispensable for full moral repair.

Those whose injuries were the result of apparent transgressions also require restoration to the broader moral community. These people go through the perceptual phase and come to see rightly that they bear no culpability. As a result, the injured person can begin to overturn the negative emotions and reactive attitudes of guilt and shame and replace them with more appropriate practical attitudes—perhaps grief and sadness at the moral harm. This correlates nicely with what Nancy Sherman refers to as "self-empathy", where one learns to have a "minimal measure of goodwill or compassion" toward oneself. It acts as a "counterweight to overbearing self-[condemnation]" and is essential to restore one's ability to promote her own flourishing (Sherman 2015, 95). Once one realizes that there is no moral culpability, she can grieve the moral harm without accepting the negative self-evaluative judgements which accompany guilt and shame. By ensuring one's beliefs match the reality of moral innocence, one can stop the injury from bleeding, so to speak, and enable one to begin to heal by re-establishing her patterns of thought, feeling, and desire.

But those who come to realize that they did not commit a moral transgression must also go through the restorative phase. Though they should not have been held liable, they may have been ostracized by their broader community or perhaps they self-alienated. Thus, they require vindication from the broader moral community (LiVecche 2021, 5). This vindication might look like a public acknowledgement of what in fact happened or it might be something deeper like institutional change,

forgiveness, or compensation. At a minimum it will involve an acknowledgement that the individual soldier's action(s), or even more broadly, the actions of the entire force, were not morally abhorrent, but are either justified or have been excused. Both Sgt. Rob Sarra, the Marine who killed the innocent Iraqi woman at the checkpoint and Staff Sgt. Eric Lauzier, whose men raped a young Iraqi girl and killed her family, would be examples of those who would need this kind restoration in the restorative phase of moral repair. Such full restoration may never come, however—the recipients of this kind of moral injury cannot force vindication.

Moral Repair for Those Injured by the Transgression(s) of Another

Like moral transgression, betrayal by those whom one has trusted does not always lead to moral injury. The individual response to PMIEs greatly informs whether the wound is immediately treated or left to fester. Many of the young men drafted into the U.S. Armed Forces returned from the Vietnam War and were subjected to this kind of moral transgression, for example. Because there was no clear victory, or even a clear idea of what was accomplished, they understood their friends to have died for nothing (Shay 1994, 7). Coupled with this sense of betrayal, was the perception by the American public that all of these returning soldiers were war criminals, like those who participated in the My Lai Massacre. Thus, all of the returning soldiers were subjected to the PMIE of an apparent (or real) betrayal by the U.S. Government and being alienated by the American public. More recently, members of the U.S. and allied Armed Forces experienced a similar betrayal—no clear victory, confusion about what was accomplished, and an evacuation of allied forces left behind governed by those they were helping Allied Forces combat—while

evacuating Afghanistan. In addition to the PMIE wrapped up within the larger withdrawal, there are smaller, more localized, incidents in the Global War on Terror. Consider this PMIE:

> In June of 2009, General Stanley McChrystal assumed command of U.S. Forces Afghanistan and the International Security and Assistance Force (USFA/ISAF). By August, he ordered sweeping changes to the rules of engagement (ROE) in Afghanistan in order to minimize non-combatant casualties. However, these changes places allied forces at much higher risk of injury and death. Soldiers felt betrayed by this change—they literally witnessed their friends and fellow soldiers die because of the tactics required by the updated ROE. I witnessed a West Point cadet ask General McChrystal a pointed question to this end a few years later, "Sir, why did you put my life and the life of my friends at so much risk."[47] It didn't matter that the General had a legitimate response based on a sound strategy. The change of ROE communicated to the soldiers on the ground that they didn't matter (much) and resulted in those soldiers becoming unable to trust that their leadership had their best interests in mind.

Surely, not everyone exposed to this PMIE allowed their experience to fester into a moral injury—a loss of trust in the moral world manifesting not only in emotional and existential pain, but in moral dysfunction, and possibly disfigurement—but some of them did.

The kind of moral repair needed in situations where the injured is the recipient of a moral crime is related, but distinct from what is needed for injuries caused by one's own moral transgressions (or perceived transgressions). For brevity, I will refer to moral repair needed in these situations as "reconciliation."[48] As in the case where

[47]I witnessed this question posed to General McChrystal during the Q&A portion of USNA's 2015 Leadership Conference Forrestal Lecture, January 26, 2015.

[48]I do not intend to mean something like "full restoration of relationship" by the term. Moral repair of this kind might result in such restoral, but I do not think it necessary and sometimes think it would be unwise for a full restoral of relationship. Victims of domestic violence and sexual assault often develop moral injury as a result of their trauma. The steps to moral repair, including forgiveness, apply to them, but full restoration of relationship is likely unwise, probably unsafe, and ultimately unnecessary for healing.

one believes one has transgressed, the first phase is perception. The aim of the perceptual phase is for the injured to regain an understanding of and belief in their own worth and dignity. In doing so, they can begin to interrupt the moral dysfunction caused by their injury. The perceptual phase of reconciliation is often done in a group setting with others who have had similar experiences or with trusted counselors. As she reconsiders the PMIE in light of what others also perceive, she can come to see the event more clearly and in line with her broader moral community. Note that, for those entering into reconciliation, their broader moral community likely consists of other morally injured people. For example, veteran groups who meet to discuss their experiences (which may include betrayal) and survivor groups (e.g., of domestic violence or sexual assault) that do the same. Importantly, repair begins with an evaluation of whether one was betrayed, or not. If not, then moral function can begin to be restored by appropriately attending to one's practical attitudes toward the PMIE in order to hold to one's reconsidered beliefs regarding it. If one was betrayed, then she must come to understand that betrayal occurred in spite of her own moral worth and not because of it. By coming to perceive herself as someone with dignity who did not deserve betrayal, she can appropriately recognize the perpetrator (or institution) as culpable for the betrayal rather than herself. The West Point Cadet who served in Afghanistan as recounted above, for instance, must come to understand that the ROE was changed, not because he and his friends weren't worth protecting, but because innocent civilians were. Similarly, the soldiers returning from Vietnam struggling with a sense of, or actual, betrayal from their superiors, their government,

and the public must come to see that their own actions were not deserving of the treatment or condemnation they underwent.

For those who come through the perceptual phase to recognize that they were not actually betrayed, but had mistakenly thought so, there may be elements of restoration that they must undergo. Because of a falsely attributed transgression, the injured may have behaved in a number of different ways, each requiring a different method to restore justice. First, they might need to atone for any wrongful treatment directed toward those whom they thought to have betrayed them. Second, they could need to forgive themselves or exercise self-empathy. Lastly, they might need to move past or release any residual anger or need to take vengeance on those whom they mistaken believed to have betrayed them.

In the case of an actual (and not merely apparent) betrayal the restoration phase is one of forgiveness. Forgiving someone or an institution does not necessitate restoration of relationship, though it might lead to it. It also does not condone, excuse, rationalize, or justify the acts being forgiven. For the purposes of this phase of moral repair, forgiveness is merely giving up the right, the need, and the desire to take vengeance on the person of group who transgressed against her. So then, what forgiveness accomplishes in the individual is a loosening of the causal impact that the PMIE has had over her life, and in particular of her anger. So long as she holds onto anger and the hope for vengeance, her practical attitudes (thoughts, feelings, and desires) are focused and shaped by such an expectation. Forgiveness enables her to reorient her practical attitudes toward her own flourishing via aspiration while also restoring her agency, and capacity to reason practically.

To summarize, in moral repair, when the morally injured come to see themselves and their actions more clearly, it enables them to understand whether the PMIE is an actual transgression, and if it is, who is culpable. Additionally, during this phase, the depth and scope of the transgression can be identified so that whether one is atoning or reconciling, she can clearly see what work needs to be accomplished in the next phase to complete moral repair. If one is culpable for a moral transgression, they need to work to restore justice and receive forgiveness. If one determines that what she did is not culpable for the PMIE and justified in her actions, she requires vindication from her broader moral community. If, as the recipient of a moral transgression, she is working through reconciliation, she will need to release the desire for vengeance against the transgressor, i.e., forgive. When the injured work through this process of repair, they learn to negate anger, guilt and shame and then to develop more appropriate and helpful practical attitudes and evaluative responses to their experiences. As they do so, the damage begins to repair; and as they reintegrate with their communities, they begin again to act in ways that promote their own and the community's flourishing.[49]

III. Moral Resilience

Moral injury results from a failure to adequately respond to the injustice inherent within a PMIE. Since there are many cases where multiple individuals are

[49]Note that atonement and reconciliation are components of full restoration of relationship—of justice being restored. However, individual moral repair is only a necessary condition of such restoration, not a sufficient one. In the case of atonement, the injured party may not (or may not be able to) forgive. For reconciliation, the transgressor may never recognize (or may not be able to do so) the harm done and take no steps toward apology and reparation.

exposed to the same PMIE where only some are injured, the primary factor or factors that determine who incurs an injury from the event must be located, not in the event, but in the different internal states among those present. For example, recently a former sailor of mine contacted me regarding a PMIE which occurred over twenty years ago. He requested an attestation (witness statement) from me regarding the event so that he could receive treatment through the veteran's association.

> During a man-overboard rescue that I led (I was the boat officer, the officer-in-charge, of the small rescue craft), he was my coxswain (small boat driver). It was a nighttime search with little lunar illumination. A person from the ship in front of ours was overboard and, unknown to us, had jumped overboard attempting suicide and was evading rescue. In our effort to find him, we "ran over" the young sailor with our boat as he was attempting to evade detection by diving under us. None of us saw him until after we "ran over" him and we didn't discover that he was evading us until weeks later when we were briefed on the incident investigation.

My coxswain has struggled with this incident for over 20 years. He believes that he made a mistake and someone suffered greatly from it. He blames himself for the harm inflicted and feels tremendous guilt and shame—the typical emotions symptomatic of moral injury (Shay 1994, 19-20; Litz, 2009, 698-99). However, the others who experienced the PMIE do not likewise suffer, though we all initially experienced the same emotions. The rest of us addressed this guilt and shame. Though, the PMIE was the same external event for all of us—a clear harming to another innocent person (in the respect that he did not deserve the harm he received), the rest of the boat crew dealt with the shame and guilt differently. Presumably, we dealt with the emotional pain in a healthy way, where we moved past the event recognizing that we were not culpable while still recognizing the tragic nature of the moral harm done to the young sailor. "Resilience" is the term used by sociologists

and psychologists to capture this ability to "bounce back" from traumatic life events (Lee *et al*. 2013, 269ff).[50] Thus, moral resilience describes and captures the ability to respond appropriately to PMIEs.

A Response to Emotional and Existential Pain

The man-overboard example illustrates two kinds of responses to the emotional pain (e.g., guilt and shame) which accompanies PMIEs. A morally resilient response where one adequately addresses the emotional pain, and a way of missing the mark, which leads to moral injury, by inadequately addressing the emotional pain of the event likely leading to moral dysfunction and the degradation of character. There is another way to miss the mark. For instance, in the man-overboard case, we could have moved past the event by dehumanizing the young sailor, first by assigning blame and responsibility to him and next by deciding not to care. Many soldiers deal with the emotional pain of PMIEs in this manner. A recent and very public example is documented in Apple TV's 2021 documentary, *The Line*, which recounts the trial of Special Operator Chief Petty Officer Eddie Gallagher and the events leading up to it.[51]

[50]Garcia-Dia, *et al.* (2013, 267) define psychological resiliency as "one's ability to bounce-back or recover from adversity." There are many studies on resilience, and related concepts of hardiness (stick-to-it-ness, or resilience over time) and grit (the quality belonging to a person that enables them to pursue a goal despite setback and resistance), with respect to elite soldiers (see for example: Bartone, et al. 2008) and the psychological and physical stressors predictive of their ability to accomplish the mission in the face of setbacks. Importantly, Litz, et al. (2019) address resilience in the face of moral injury.

[51]He was acquitted of all but one small charge (posing for a picture with the dead ISIS fighter) at Courts Martial.

Eddie Gallagher, a former Navy SEAL, was charged with war crimes. Among those crimes was the stabbing of a 17-year-old wounded ISIS prisoner who had been transferred to U.S. Custody. The event (a PMIE) was so disturbing to a number of other junior SEALs in Eddie's platoon that they reported him, their boss, upon return from deployment. At one point, Eddie claims that "you have to become a monster to kill a monster" (Episode 1, 4:20). I believe he is inferring that one must dismiss his normal concern for the lives of others (i.e., become a monster) in order to kill those who have done the same. In other words, to kill without remorse, one must callous himself against seeing the enemy as human. Thus, one callouses himself against the emotional and existential pain of PMIEs by becoming vicious.

Choosing to become vicious in this manner leads to a moral dysfunction and a degradation of character. Therefore, one's choices to alienate and dehumanize the enemy and non-combatants also results in moral injury. So, to avoid moral injury, one must learn how to address injustices and the emotional pain inherent in her experience of PMIEs excellently. In other words, she must develop the virtue of moral resilience.

Moral Resilience as a Virtue

In section I, I used the features of physical injuries as an analogy to those of moral injuries. If that analogy holds, moral injuries ought to have a similar relationship to moral resilience as physical injuries have to physical resilience. Physical resilience is a prophylactic for physical injuries. By strengthening and conditioning the body, one decreases the likelihood of injury. When an injury does occur, steps are taken to restore physical function, and then one strengthens and

conditions the injured area in isolation. The specific strategies used to repair specific physical injuries are the same general strategies used to develop strength and endurance. Thus, in order to discover how one might build moral resilience, we can look to instances of moral repair and generalize those strategies. More specifically, the same steps one takes to cure a moral injury are the ones that build moral resilience. In what follows, I identify ways the steps of moral repair can be employed to develop moral resilience.

Moral resilience is exemplified when one accurately perceives the moral particulars of the situation and then acts to maintain or restore justice (understood here as right relationship to others both in one's community and more broadly) when moral harm occurs. These actions include accurately perceiving the moral truth of the matter (the perceptual phase of moral repair), and then either making reparations and apologizing or seeking vindication (restorative phase), or giving forgiveness (reconciliation phase). Moral resilience like other virtues, is a readiness or preparedness to act in a particular manner. In this case, it is a readiness to perceive correctly, restore, forgive, vindicate, and reconcile, depending on the particular situation. Thus, those who are habituated to acting in such a manner are able to move past PMIEs, respond to them accordingly, and bounce back from actual injuries because they already know how to conduct moral repair with their own moral transgressions and with those of others.

Like physical and mental resilience, moral resilience is dispositional and developmental. As such, it can be analyzed as a moral virtue. A fully virtuous person, a moral exemplar, would see what justice requires given PMIEs and so would

not perpetrate a moral injury. If she acts unjustly, she sees this right away and responds appropriately. And if she is the recipient of an injustice, she knows how to respond appropriately and so avoid moral injury. We should not assume a fully virtuous person, though, but instead someone progressing along the path of moral virtue. Avoiding moral injury, or bouncing back (morally) from a PMIE then, involves appropriately addressing moral wrongs when they occur. Though wisdom, courage, and temperance may be required to act in this way, the primary virtue involved in moral resilience is justice, for justice involves the ability to see when a wrong has occurred and respond in such a way as to make things right. Thus, it turns out that in order to have moral resilience, you must be just. Recall Sgt. Sarra, for example, he perceived his actions as murder even though he was justified in taking the action he did.[52] Had he seen things for what they were, a justified use of deadly force, then he would have not seen a murder, but a tragic death. The morally resilient person would see moral events as they are. She would possess a calibrated moral perception and accompanying practical attitudes that would enable her to see herself truly as well as others in the midst of the PMIE. If Sgt. Sarra had seen himself as someone who killed another in self-defense, he would have had different practical attitudes, and so would have come to different moral conclusions with respect to himself and others in the midst of this shooting. For example, instead of shame and guilt, he could have felt grief at both the death and the circumstances that led to it. He would have recognized that a grave moral harm had occurred—the death of

[52]I recognize that on some interpretations of the Iraq War and *jus in bello*, he might not be justified and at best he only can be excused for his actions. However, I'm assuming that soldiers, unless they violate *jus in bello*, are morally excused or justified and thus blameless with respect to the death they cause.

innocent woman—but also that he took appropriate action to protect his position. Thus, properly perceiving this event includes appropriate grief directed at a moral harm (even when there is no moral culpability or liability). Had Sgt. Sarra acted in accordance with the virtue of justice, had he seen this situation rightly, he would not have held himself morally culpable for the woman's death. He would have recognized, however, that grievous harm was done and that that harm needed to be appropriately addressed—whether by him or a representative of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Moral resilience, then, requires the virtue of justice. It is the disposition or readiness to perceive oneself accurately with respect to the others around her and within the relevant social contexts concerning justice as well as a preparedness to give others (and oneself) what they are justly due. This virtue provides an accurate assessment of moral particulars and the recognition of when things need to be made right. Moral resilience is related to the part of the virtue of justice which acts when justice has been damaged or broken. It is the appropriate response to injustice, even and especially injustice perpetrated by oneself or one's community. When confronted with PMIEs, then, a morally resilient person will recognize the moral particulars of the case—whether there was a transgression, harm, etc.—and then act appropriately to restore justice. Thus, the virtue of justice enables one to avoid or "bounce-back" from PMIEs or actual morally injurious events. So, when one habituates moral resilience, she habituates (at least in part) the virtue of justice.

IV. The Role of the Military in Forming Morally Resilient Soldiers

Since the nature of this virtue necessarily concerns how one sees and interacts with others, moral resilience (and justice), while part of one's individual character, must be exercised and learned within one's moral community. Therefore, the military as a moral community has a role and an interest to train its individual members to become morally resilient. I do not intend to diminish the responsibility of each soldier to develop her own virtue—virtues cannot be forced upon a person and must be developed and habituated with intentional effort on the part of the individual. Without pursuing the habits that would bring one to appreciate and desire justice for its own sake, one cannot develop the virtue of justice and with it, moral resilience. So, though the institution cannot make people virtuous, it can facilitate the development of virtue. It can create fertile soil from which virtue can grow even though the seed must still originate within the heart of each individual. Individuals generally need external experiences, mentors, and community to facilitate virtue development. Thus, these are three areas that the military institution can intentionally provide support for individuals. First, to inspire and motivate the virtue of resilience, it can elevate and illuminate moral exemplars who clearly display moral resilience. Second, in addition to the model that moral exemplars provide, the institution can implement focused training exercises to train people how to conduct moral triage (to see things appropriately) and to restore justice once it's been violated—namely, the institution can train soldiers in the practice of moral resilience. Lastly, because the community's moral posture usually has a large effect on what actions are considered

normal, just, and appropriate, the institution can determine to have, as a primary aim of the institution, the restoration of justice—and when it fails to have such aim, it can take steps to atone for its moral failure. To provide fertile soil to develop a community of morally resilient soldiers, the institution itself must be just and have justice as its primary mission.[53]

Exemplars of Moral Resilience

When exemplars behave in ways that are imitably attractive, one may come to admire them (Zagzebski 2017, 35). Admiration, as an emotion, provides an affective judgment consisting of cognitive, or conceptual, information, affective information, and a conative force. Through admiration, one sees someone who is attractive, recognizes her as attractive, and desires to be like her. These kinds of encounters can lead one to aspire to be like the exemplar in her excellence. In the case of justice and resilience, a notable exemplar is Admiral William McRaven. When serving as commander of the Joint Special Operations Command, U.S. Central Command, Navy SEALs under his command conducted an operation in Southern Afghanistan. Due to an unfortunate accident, two pregnant women and three other innocents were killed by U.S. Forces. To atone for the deaths of innocents, then Vice Admiral McRaven boarded a helicopter along with a few sheep. The formalized cultural manner in the region to make reparations and apologize for wrongful deaths—to request forgiveness—is the offering of sheep. Admiral McRaven took responsibility for the

[53]Jonathan Shay's recommendations correspond well with mine. From the lens of a clinical psychiatrist, in his concluding chapter of *Achilles*, "Prevention", he recommends, among other things, to protect unit cohesion and moral support from home, to do the work of grieving with the members of the units, acknowledging (moral and) psychological wounds, and respecting the dignity of enemies. See (Shay 1994, 196-202).

deaths, as they occurred under his command, and took appropriate steps to atone for the moral harm. His actions are imitably attractive and ought to be lauded and held up as an example of just action in response to an injustice, as morally resilient.

Individuals like Admiral McRaven are not the only kind of exemplars who are imitably attractive with respect to moral resilience. Those who have been morally injured and have gone through the process of moral repair can be great examples of resilience. I once went through training on the dangers and consequences of drunk driving where there were two presenters. The first speaker was a victim, she had lost one of her two children and her husband to the actions of a drunk driver. The next speaker was someone who had been convicted of drunk driving, served his time, and now traveled to speak to others as part of his atonement (reparation). As he told his story, it became apparent that he was the driver who killed the first presenter's husband and child. It was heartbreaking, but clearly this talk exemplified two examples of individuals who had done and were doing the work of moral repair. Military members who are doing the work or have done the work of moral repair can be powerful exemplars that the institution ought to make known, and elevate them. Living Medal of Honor members are often lifted up as exemplars of uncommon courage, the armed forces can do something similar with those who have undergone moral repair or who practice the virtue of resilience.[54]

[54]Survivors of sexual assault who have done the work of psychological and moral repair are increasingly being given this kind of platform in the military—and they should be. Survivors of other kinds of moral injury ought to be elevated, too.

Training for Moral Resilience

No institution can force people into virtue, but the military can provide training in moral resilience so that those who are motivated are given the know-how to develop such resilience. This training must consist in directing soldiers' attention to exemplars of moral resilience as well as training units of soldiers to model the perceptual aspects of moral repair—re-considering what actions were taken and coming into agreement about what actually happened morally—among the members of the small unit. Military units already have procedures in place to work through pragmatic and non-moral errors, large and small. There are "hot washes", "lessons-learned" sessions, "stand-downs", and other formal and informal opportunities for individuals to admit mistakes, apologize, and recommend ways forward and for individuals to call out mistakes made by others and suggest ways that those mistakes might be mitigated in the future. In healthy leadership climates, such debriefs are not condemnatory or punitive, but instead serve to help the whole team move past mistakes with actionable steps to avoid them in the future.

Along with these steps, broken confidences and loss of trust in one another ought to be specifically addressed. For example, many years ago, I had a sailor under my command commit suicide. A number of my sailors blamed themselves for his choice—one had sold him the gun, others had recently revealed that he had been stealing from them, etc. We spent hours together talking through the various ways in which we might have been responsible and came to understand that we were not to blame. Together, we were able to vindicate each other. A different example involves

General Jim Mattis morally restoring a brigade of Marines within his Division (Mattis 2023). Marines within this particular brigade broke procedure which resulted in the deaths of non-combatants. After the brigade commander investigated the incident, he determined that the Marines were not acting out of mal-intention, but out of a lack of discipline. After appropriate corrective action was taken with the Marines involved, the General spoke to the brigade, acknowledged their mistake, and forgave them with the expectation that they would not again forget their training. He spent 10 minutes making eye-contact with all 800 Marines in order to communicate to each of them that he and they were moving past the incident—they were restored to his full trust.

Modeling and training small units to conduct moral triage through debriefs and hot-washes as well as working through the appropriate steps of moral repair within these debriefs, gives soldiers the tools to bounce back from PMIEs without contracting an injury. When restoring justice is practiced in the normal course of non-combat activity and combat training, it will more easily be practiced in war when PMIEs are more prevalent.

Just Warriors

The aims and purposes of a military institution frame the collective self-understanding and self-image held by the members of the broader armed forces community. Thus, both the explicitly stated purposes and the implied purposes implicit in actions of the military institution can influence both moral repair and moral resilience. Changing the name of the U.S. Department of War, for instance, to the Department of Defense explicitly reframes the military as an agent of protection and defense, not one of aggression and offense. The U.S. in general, and the U.S.

military in particular, purports to enter and fight in wars governed broadly by the Just War Tradition (with an end of restoring justice initiated by a moral duty to defend) as indicated by the department's name change. I have no wish to question the veracity (or not) of this public posture. However, I do wish to point out a complicating guiding principle widely held amongst military leadership: the job of the military is to win the nation's wars. This guiding principle has shaped much of contemporary American thought on the civil-military political relationship and is widely taught in military finishing schools concerned with strategy and policy. The prolific military theorist Carl von Clausewitz clearly articulated this view of the military as just another policy instrument of the government: "war is nothing but the continuation of policy by other means" and that "war is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will" (Clausewitz 1976, 69, 75). If this purpose—winning the nation's wars—is not constrained within the moral boundaries of the just war tradition, then it will create greater potential for moral injury and diminish moral resilience within the ranks. When soldiers merely see their duty as an act of compelling the enemy to do what their nation demands, then every act taken in war has a potential unjust, coercive element to it and thus becomes a PMIE. However, when they see their duty as winning the nation's wars in a manner that invites the restoration of justice, the likelihood decreases of PMIEs occurring.

Similarly, the likelihood of bouncing back, restoring justice, in the event of moral error increases. When the institution's known purpose is clearly the restoration of justice—and not, e.g., domination for its own sake—it shapes the purposes of the individuals. Thus, soldiers are more likely to perceive when moral error has occurred

and be willing to enter into the practices of moral resilience needed to restore justice. There is a scenario, likely apocryphal, which nicely illustrates how an institutional understanding of the unit or group's mission and purpose impacts individual action: An inexperienced Marine was readying his rifle to fire on a fleeing (but not yet surrendered) enemy when the Gunnery Sergeant put his hand on his Marine's rifle, lowing it, and said, "Marines don't do that." The scenario places the Marine in a community which shares a purpose that constrains action—there is a code of conduct to which each member is expected to conform. The Gunnery Sergeant is holding the members of his community responsible with respect to this code.[55] It is an important part of being a soldier that she acts not only for her own reasons, but for shared reasons (Sherman 2021, 109). So, the community is central and in the case of the armed services, plays a central role in establishing what just conduct looks like. Defenders who seek for vengeance and hate those perpetuating injustice cannot restore justice. Only those who can overcome hatred and vengeance "by the greatness of [their] love" are fit to inflict the justice of war (Augustine, *On the Sermon on the Mount* XX.62).[56]

To minimize the events that become PMIEs and to respond well to them when they do occur, our nation and its soldiers must be peacemakers in truth. The political aims and institutional aims, therefore, must take into consideration the tenets of the Just War Tradition and take the restoration and establishment of a just peace as their

[55]This phenomenon of codes specific to warrior groups is not new. See Shannon French's *Code of the Warrior* (2017) which, among other things, traces this phenomenon throughout the history of many warrior cultures.

[56]Cited in Livecche 2021, 157.

primary purpose in winning a war. Wars must be fought in a way that makes forgiveness and reconciliation possible. They cannot not only be construed as defending one's or one's nation's rights, but as a duty and an act of love in which a wrong is made right and justice (and peace) are restored.[57] When the aim is never only to defend rights, but also to restore justice, then reconciliation will be included in the purpose and aim of the war. This posture will be present in the minds of individual soldiers and help them both to trust that their actions prosecuting the war support justice and also to take appropriate action toward restoring justice when their actions fail to be just.

V. Conclusion: Inoculation Is Possible

If I am correct, then moral resilience can be formed via intentional habituation, just like any other virtue. Because it is a mode of the virtue of justice, it necessarily involves the appropriate treatment and perception of others. Thus, like other virtues, it is best practiced and developed in groups. We know how to develop this virtue, because we know how to conduct moral repair. The military institution can support the three areas of character development that are naturally external to the subject. First, they can hold up exemplars as examples of practice and as imitably attractive people. Next, they can train and practice moral resilience, focusing on forming and habituating perceptual and restorative phase activities within their units. Lastly, they can establish a climate and culture of moral resilience by adhering to and collectively elevating restoration and forgiveness as the just aim of war.

[57]See Nigel Biggar's second chapter of *In Defence of War*, entitled "Love in War" for a full treatment of this fascinating topic (Biggar 2013, 61ff.).

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