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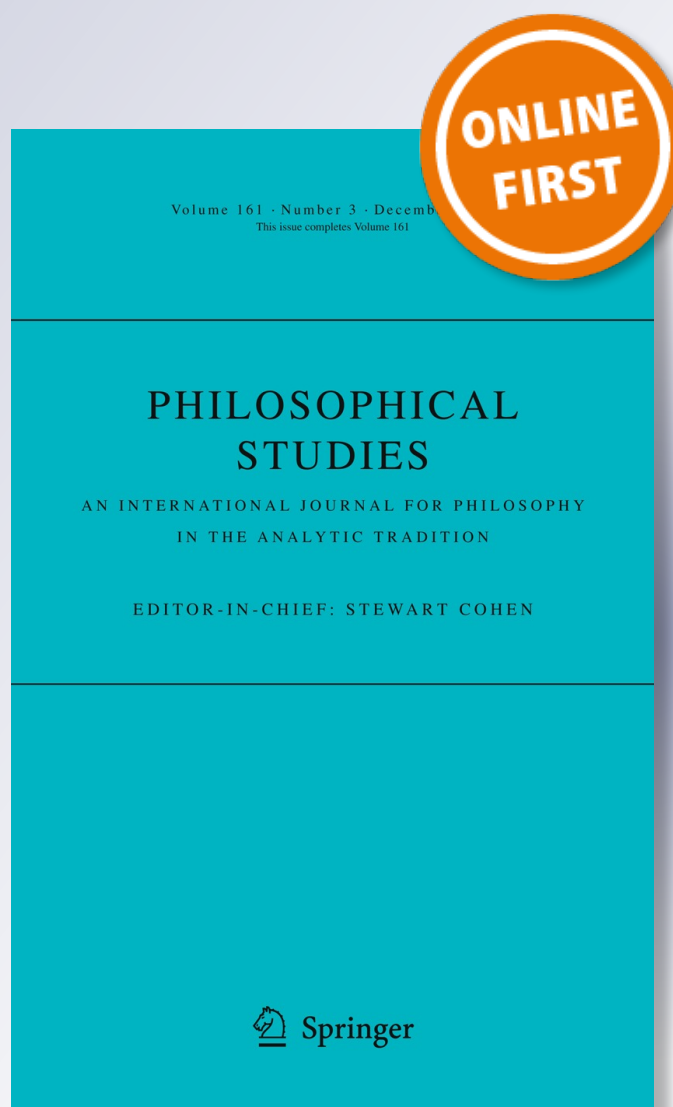
Philosophical Studies

An International Journal for Philosophy
in the Analytic Tradition

ISSN 0031-8116

Philos Stud

DOI 10.1007/s11098-012-9993-5



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Rational requirements and 'rational' akrasia

Edward S. Hinchman

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Abstract Can akrasia be rational? Can it be rational to resist the motivational force of your own practical judgment? While I do not believe that akrasia can be rational, I think there is something revealingly right in recent arguments for the proposition. I aim to defend that insight in a way that does not entail that akrasia can be rational but more fundamentally addresses the normative structure of rational requirements. The fundamental issue lies in the relationship between two conceptions of rationality. Previous treatments of 'rational' akrasia have tended to regard rationality as a responsiveness to reasons. Previous treatments of rational requirements have tended to regard rationality as an attitudinal coherence. I'll reformulate the question of rational akrasia within a framework that construes rationality as coherence. And I'll reformulate the question of rational coherence to admit the possibility of reasoning as the apparently rational akratic does—from failure to follow through on a judgment to abandonment of that judgment. I'll argue that rational requirements codify an agential coherence that you negotiate through a dynamic of self-trust and self-mistrust. It is not reasoning to abandon your judgment through forgetfulness, confusion or perverse self-rebellion. But it can be reasoning to abandon your judgment through reasonable self-mistrust. The difference lies in how self-mistrust can manifest a sensitivity to the norm of rational coherence that gives normative force to rational requirements. The core insight of those who defend the possibility of 'rational' akrasia lies in their emphasis on the rational force of self-mistrust.

Keywords Trust · Self-trust · Akrasia · Rationality · Reasoning

E. S. Hinchman (✉)
Department of Philosophy, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, P. O. Box 413,
Milwaukee, WI 53201, USA
e-mail: hinchman@uwm.edu

On one conception of practical rationality, being rational is most fundamentally a matter of avoiding incoherent combinations of attitudes. This conception construes the norms of rationality as codified by rational requirements, and one plausible rational requirement is that you not be akratic: that you not judge, all things considered, that you ought to ϕ while failing to choose or intend to ϕ . On another conception of practical rationality, being rational is most fundamentally a matter of thinking or acting in a way that's informed by your practical reasons. This second conception construes the norms of rationality in terms that appear to allow the possibility of rational akrasia, since your capacity to act on your reasons can function at a level that need not involve deliberative judgment. (As we'll see, it is plausible to regard your deliberative judgment as merely one medium for registering your practical reasons, with emotions and undeliberated habits serving as other media.) Though their treatments of akrasia make them seem incompatible, I'll argue that the two conceptions of rationality are not incompatible. It is possible to accommodate the core insight motivating defenses of 'rational' akrasia within the conception of rationality as codified by requirements of rational coherence.

On the conception of rationality as codified by requirements of rational coherence, talk of 'rational akrasia' is self-contradictory. But I'll argue that defenses of 'rational' akrasia simply misformulate their core insight. What those arguments aim to vindicate is better understood as a thesis about how you can reason your way out of akratic irrationality. The obvious way to do it is by bringing your inclinations to choose or intend into line with your practical judgment. But the insight that talk of 'rational' akrasia misformulates is that you can also reason your way out of akratic irrationality by bringing your practical judgment into line with your inclinations to choose or intend. My principal aim is to explain how an agent can do that compatibly with the conception of rationality as codified by requirements of rational coherence. As we'll see, abandoning your practical judgment in response to a disinclination to commit yourself to it can be a way of *reasoning* your way from akratic irrationality into rational coherence. Rational requirements codify not logical or formal coherence, I'll argue, but an agential coherence that you negotiate through a dynamic of self-trust and self-mistrust. It is not reasoning to abandon your judgment through forgetfulness, confusion or perverse self-rebellion. But it can be reasoning to abandon your judgment through reasonable self-mistrust. The difference lies in how self-mistrust can manifest a sensitivity to the norm of rational coherence that gives normative force to rational requirements. The core insight of those who defend the possibility of 'rational' akrasia lies in their emphasis on the rational force of self-mistrust.

Here's an overview of how I'll argue for this rapprochement between the two conceptions of rationality. I'll set the terms of discussion in Sect. 1, contrasting my approach with Nomy Arpaly's influential defense of 'rational' akrasia, which I'll argue depends on adopting a narrow-scope interpretation of relevant rational requirements. In Sect. 2, I'll rehearse a recent debate between John Broome and Niko Kolodny on the scope of these requirements, a debate that will continue to inform my treatment, since I'll argue that each side has a grip on an important part of the truth. I'll accept the debate's guiding conception of rational requirements as specifying relations of rational coherence among an agent's judgments, commitments, attitudes, and actions—in the examples we'll work from, the coherence

between a practical judgment and the 'downstream' attitude, choice or intention, whereby one commits oneself to executing the judgment in action. The question is how the requirements of rationality govern the 'direction' of reasoning. In Sect. 3, I'll make a proposal that Broome and Kolodny do not properly consider: that akratic incoherence—a self-conscious failure to commit to your own judgment—could provide a basis for reasoning in an 'upstream' direction to the abandonment of that judgment.¹ I'll begin my elaboration and defense of the proposal in Sect. 4, where I'll link it to the debate over 'rational' akrasia by recasting an argument proposed by Karen Jones, reorienting its thrust away from the thesis that akrasia could itself be rational and towards the thesis that I'll develop in Sect. 5: that the question of rationality in cases of 'rational' akrasia addresses not the akratic state itself but the agent's commitment to resolve it toward rational coherence. I'll reply to a broad worry about my approach in Sect. 6 by diagnosing why one is bound to misconstrue the idea of upstream reasoning if one accepts, as both Broome and Kolodny do, T. M. Scanlon's account of practical judgment, an account that my argument gives grounds for rejecting. If we can understand how one might resolve akrasia in an upstream direction—abandoning the judgment *because* one akratically fails to commit to it—we'll have preserved a core strand in the idea that akrasia could be rationally praiseworthy. As we'll see, the issue depends on how norms governing the attitudes of trust and mistrust apply intrapersonally. Once we're clear how it can be rationally praiseworthy to resolve akrasia by mistrustfully abandoning your own judgment, the possibility of such upstream reasoning helps us reframe the debate on rational requirements.

Previous defenses of 'rational' akrasia have tended to regard rationality as a responsiveness to reasons. Previous treatments of rational requirements have tended to treat rationality as an attitudinal coherence. The paper aims to commensurate these two small but vibrant literatures: both to reformulate the question of 'rational' akrasia within a framework that construes rationality as coherence, and to reformulate the question of rational coherence to admit the possibility of upstream reasoning—though the term 'rational akrasia' is unintelligible within that framework. Once we clarify the nature of rational coherence, we'll see how the ancient virtue of rational self-control—*enkrateia*—can counter akrasia in either direction. What previous discussions treat as 'rational' akrasia is simply your predicament when *enkrateia* requires you to abandon your judgment rather than follow through on it.

1 How the question of 'rational' akrasia raises the question of scope

Let me begin by contrasting my approach with Arpaly's defense of 'rational' akrasia (2000, 2003). The contrast will take us quickly from her treatment of akrasia to the scope debate.

¹ I take the stream metaphor from Kolodny (2005, 2007a), though like any metaphor it can mislead. The stream flows from judgment to choice or intention. But in another sense the only 'flow' here is the process of your reasoning. Of course, when you reason 'upstream' you are not at all swimming against *that!* Talk of 'reasoning' can also mislead: we are not assuming that all reasoning involves the deliberative weighing of reasons. A non-metaphorical way of putting the thesis will emerge in Sects. 3–5.

First, I will not pose the question of ‘rational’ akrasia in the comparative terms that Arpaly uses. Arpaly does not claim that akrasia can be simply rational. She claims that it can be *more* rational in a given case than enkrateia—that is, than remaining true to your judgment. For a reason that will emerge presently, however, I will not ask whether following through on your all-things-considered—that is, ‘best’—judgment must be *more* rational than not following through on it. I’ll instead pose this non-comparative question: how must your acts and attitudes cohere for you to count as satisfying the rational requirement linking best judgment and follow-through?² Second, this conception of rational coherence is narrower than the conception that Arpaly is working with. Arpaly engages a conception of rational coherence that she finds in Michael Smith’s work, a conception of coherence among the agent’s mental states in general. I’ll focus on a more local coherence manifested in reasonable self-trust.³

While neither the emphasis on generality nor the comparative analysis entails the other, they fit together by virtue of a third assumption informing Arpaly’s discussion that I’ll also reject. Arpaly assumes that the question is whether following through on your best judgment must be more rational than not following through because she treats the judgment itself as given: she does not consider the possibility that you might respond to your situation by abandoning that judgment. In the terms that I’ll introduce systematically in the next section, she interprets the norm whose application she’s investigating as having narrow scope. Assuming that ‘judge’ marks your best judgment, she asks her question this way: Given that you judge that you ought to ϕ , are you under a rational obligation to ϕ ? By contrast, I’ll ask the question in a way that permits a wide-scope reading of the norm: Are you under a rational obligation with the content that you ϕ if you judge that you ought to ϕ ? On the wide-scope interpretation, we don’t assume that you judge that you ought to ϕ , and then ask whether you’re rationally obligated to follow through on the judgment. We ask whether you’re rationally obligated to follow through on your best judgment, leaving open the possibility that you regain rationality from the clutches of akratic temptation in an ‘upstream’ direction—not by following through but instead by abandoning the judgment. As we’ll see in the next two sections, it’s a bit tricky to formulate this possibility cogently. But I’ll argue that we cannot make sense of the important intuitions informing Arpaly’s argument—intuitions that, as we’ll see, she somewhat misconstrues—without acknowledging the possibility of such ‘upstream’ reasoning.

Here’s how this third point of contrast can explain the first two. First, Arpaly assumes that the question of rationality must be comparative—that is, that the

² Note also that by ‘akrasia’ I’ll not mean what Richard Holton means by ‘weakness of will’ (2009, pp. 70–71). I’ll be talking about a failure to follow through on—that is, to commit to—your all-things-considered judgment by failing to intend accordingly. Holton, by contrast, is talking about a failure to follow through—that is, to act—on your intention. For more on the distinction between the judgment-to-commitment rational nexus and the commitment-to-action rational nexus, see Hinchman (2009).

³ Note how the reply that Arpaly reports Michael Smith making in personal communication (2000, pp. 498–501; 2003, pp. 43–46) appears to appeal to the agent’s untrustworthiness in judging. Without a reconceptualization of rational coherence along the lines we’ll pursue, such a reply cannot overcome the objections that Arpaly presses against Smith’s.

question must be whether following through on your best judgment is more rational than not following through—because, in accordance with the narrow-scope interpretation, she does not treat as an option the possibility that you abandon the judgment. Now it would be an obvious mistake to pose the question of rationality in these broader comparative terms: which is more rational, following through, not following through, or abandoning the judgment? This would be a mistake for a reason that Arpaly herself emphasizes: akrasia certainly cannot be rational in the way of deliberately useful advice (you can't deliberately ask yourself 'Hey, why not go akratic?'). Acknowledging the possibility of abandoning the judgment shifts the focus away from Arpaly's deliberately oriented comparative question—should you follow through or not follow through?—to a different and apparently more fundamental comparative question: should you retain your judgment or abandon it? But the third possibility—retaining the judgment without following through on it, though the time has now arrived to act—can no more figure as an option here. With the possibility of abandoning your judgment clearly in view, any argument for thinking that it is less rational to follow through on your judgment than not to follow through becomes an argument that you ought to abandon that judgment. We simply lose grip on Arpaly's comparative question.⁴

Asking whether you should retain the judgment focuses the question of rational coherence on the relation specifically between the judgment and the attitude—choice, intention, or some other commissive stance—manifesting follow-through. How must judgment cohere with follow-through? If you find yourself in the situation of judging, all things considered, that you ought to ϕ , are you thereby under a rational obligation to choose or intend to ϕ ? Or is it rationally permissible for you, in that situation, to treat your failure to choose or intend to ϕ as a basis for abandoning your judgment that you ought to ϕ ? I'll argue that the latter can count as a species of coherence in the guise of 'upstream' reasoning, rationally on a par with the 'downstream' species favored in philosophical accounts of rationality. I'll develop a framework for treating both species as manifestations of rational self-regulation, or *enkrateia*. Of course, larger questions may remain about the coherence of your mental states. Our question will address specifically how your acts and attitudes must cohere for you to count as satisfying the rational requirement linking judgment and practical commitment. As we'll see, they must cohere in a relation of reasonable self-trust.

So the question becomes whether we ought to adopt the narrow-scope interpretation. Let's now turn to John Broome's argument against that interpretation. Since I reject a core component of Broome's position, I hope to improve Broome's argument for the wide-scope interpretation of rational requirements linking judgment and commitment. The intuitions and observations informing Arpaly's argument will prove crucial to that task, leading us to appreciate how the possibility of akrasia must figure in an account of rationality—though the argument leads us away us from the thesis that akrasia can itself be (even comparatively) rational.

⁴ Of course, you might have ulterior reasons for retaining the judgment—for example, a payoff directly for that. No such reasons are in play in the sort of case we're considering.

2 Wide or narrow? State or process?

Broome engages our issue via a worry about ‘bootstrapping.’⁵ He argues for this thesis: that your falling under a given requirement of rationality, through having made a judgment, does not ensure that you ought to follow through on that judgment with any corresponding commitment.⁶ Your having formed a judgment or belief could not ensure that you ought to follow through on it, he argues, because if it did you would acquire a rational obligation to do or believe things we think you have no rational obligation to do or believe. It is easiest to put this point in terms of ‘reasons,’ so let’s play along with Broome’s proposal—nothing will turn on whether he’s right—that a ‘reason’ to do or believe something is just an explanation why you ought to do or believe that thing.⁷ Judging that you ought to pursue a foolish end does not provide a reason to pursue means to it—not even if that is your ‘best’ or all-things-considered judgment. As we’ll see, Broome’s argument rests on a proposal that we interpret rational requirements as having wide rather than narrow scope.

Note first a feature of his approach to the issue. Although Broome did not make this explicit, the argument for the wide-scope proposal whereby he vindicates his thesis presupposes a more fundamental claim: that you *do* have a general obligation to satisfy the individual requirements of rationality.⁸ (Broome has subsequently backed off this claim,⁹ and he did not specifically defend it in the earlier papers.) If you did not have a general obligation to satisfy the individual requirements of rationality, your having made a judgment could not ensure that you have a bootstrapping reason to follow through on it. After all, your making the judgment alone could not entail that you ought to follow through on it; the bootstrapping entailment threatens only if you ought in general to follow through on your judgments. There are thus two ways to guard against illicit bootstrapping: argue, with Broome, for the wide-scope proposal or argue for the denial of this more fundamental claim.

In an ambitious reply to Broome, Niko Kolodny has articulated a sophisticated version of the latter strategy. On his view, forming a judgment or commitment necessarily involves the *belief* that you thereby have a reason to follow through on it, but because the more fundamental claim is false you in fact have no such reason—that is, no reason given *thereby*.¹⁰ Broome’s thesis follows from this. So

⁵ As Broome acknowledges, the worry about bootstrapping generalizes an argument made earlier by Bratman (1987, pp. 24–27).

⁶ For the thesis, see Broome (1999; 2001a, pp. 181–182; 2001b; 2002, pp. 92–97; 2004, p. 29). Broome also gives other arguments for the thesis in the earlier of these papers. But when he defends it in more recent papers (e.g. 2007b, p. 354) he uses only the argument from illicit bootstrapping.

⁷ See Broome (2004). For a critique of Broome’s proposal, see Brunero (2012).

⁸ For the more fundamental claim, see the papers cited in the first sentence of note 6 above. For some observations on the grounds for this attribution, see Kolodny (2005, p. 514, n. 5). As I’m about to observe (see note 9 below), Broome has more recently pulled back from the claim.

⁹ In Broome (2005) he describes himself as “agnostic” on the question (4). See also Broome (2007c).

¹⁰ Kolodny (2005, pp. 557–560; 2007b, pp. 242–244; 2008a, pp. 456–462; 2008b, pp. 387–390). Note that Kolodny makes no appeal to a subjective species of rationality. Nor, as his exchange with Jason

both Broome and Kolodny accept that thesis, though they argue for it in different ways. My argument will exploit how these two routes to the thesis—via a shared worry about bootstrapping—amount to a debate about the normative structure of rationality.

The debate turns on two questions: first, whether rational requirements have wide scope or narrow; second, whether they are state requirements or process requirements. We can illustrate with the case that we're already discussing (which is the example most discussed by both authors), the requirement that you intend to do what you judge you ought to do, all things considered. In narrow-scope formulation, that would read:

Narrow Necessarily, if you judge that you ought to ϕ , then rationality requires that you intend to ϕ .

And in wide-scope formulation, it would read:

Wide Necessarily, rationality requires that (if you judge that you ought to ϕ , then you intend to ϕ).

On **Wide** your judging that you ought to ϕ would not generate a requirement that you intend to ϕ , but on **Narrow** it would. On **Wide**, rationality requires only that you either form the intention or cease to make that judgment. Perhaps you ought to do the latter. Broome argues that to avoid illicit bootstrapping we must regard rational requirements as having wide scope.¹¹

Broome's defense of the wide-scope reading dovetails with his position on the second question: rational requirements require merely that you not be in the state of having undertaken the commitment while failing to follow through on it.¹² If rational requirements are state requirements, thus defined, then you could satisfy a rational requirement—that is, do what rationality requires of you—simply by abandoning the commitment. But the consequent of that conditional is the claim that Kolodny rejects. The only way to satisfy a rational requirement is to be guided by it, in Kolodny's metaphor, 'going forward' through a process of 'downstream' reasoning. In this respect, he concludes, rational requirements are process requirements.

Footnote 10 continued

Bridges makes clear (Bridges 2009; Kolodny 2009), does Kolodny hold that it seems that your judgment itself *gives* you a reason to follow through on it. He claims merely that when you make a judgment it always seems to you that you *have* a reason to follow through on it.

¹¹ In his 1999 Broome calls this a 'non-detaching' normative relation (as opposed to narrow-scope 'detaching' relations). The terminology of 'narrow scope' and 'wide scope' appears for the first time in Broome (2004). In the concluding sections of Broome (2007d), he argues that for reasons that echo Kolodny's criticisms "we shall need to go beyond either formulation," but he concedes that he has "not yet explored these options" (pp. 36–37).

¹² The distinction between 'state' and process' requirements was coined by Kolodny (2005, p. 517) in the course of arguing against Broome. Broome subsequently (2007a, p. 366) embraced the thesis that rational requirements are state requirements.

In his main argument for this conclusion,¹³ Kolodny observes that the scope debate would not seem pressing if the requirements at issue were state requirements. Here are the requirements formulated as narrow- and wide-scope state requirements:

Narrow State	Necessarily, if you judge at t that you ought to ϕ , then rationality requires that you intend at t to ϕ .
Wide State	Necessarily, rationality requires that you not be in the following state: you judge at t that you ought to ϕ , but you do not intend at t to ϕ .

When we apply these principles we confront three possibilities: you make the judgment and form the intention, you make the judgment but do not form the intention, or you do not make the judgment. Kolodny observes that **Narrow State** and **Wide State** yield different results only in the third case: you satisfy **Wide State** but merely fail to violate **Narrow State**. Therefore, “the choice between wide and narrow scope matters only in so far as the difference between satisfying a requirement and not violating it matters” (2007a, p. 374). But that is not, Kolodny notes, an important difference in the context of his debate with Broome.

It will provide a route back to the issue of ‘rational’ akrasia if we follow Kolodny on this point. Since we do find the scope debate pressing, let’s reorient it as a debate over process requirements. Here is a narrow-scope process requirement:

Narrow Process	Necessarily, if you judge at t that you ought to ϕ , but you do not intend at t to ϕ , then rationality requires you to form going forward from t , on the basis of the content of your judgment, the intention to ϕ .
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And here is Kolodny’s formulation of the cognate wide-scope process requirement:

Wide Process_K	Necessarily, if you judge at t that you ought to ϕ , but you do not intend at t to ϕ , then rationality requires you (EITHER to form going forward from t , on the basis of the content [of] your judgment, the intention to ϕ , OR to revise going forward from t , on the basis of the content of your lack of an intention to ϕ , your judgment that you ought to ϕ).
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¹³ What I’m calling his ‘main’ argument is in fact Kolodny’s third argument against Broome on this point. Kolodny first observes that “our ordinary attributions of irrationality are at least sometimes about what people do, or refuse to do, over time” (2007a, p. 371), which suggests that at least some of the requirements at issue are process requirements. He next observes that at least some of these requirements “can function as advice or guide your deliberation” (2007a, pp. 371–372), which appears to conflict with Broome’s claim that they are state requirements, since a state requirement tells you merely to avoid a certain state without telling which of the two ways of doing so to pursue. These arguments fail to do much damage, however, since Broome can reply that avoiding or exiting from an irrational state is, first, something that people do or fail to do over time and, second, something that you can advise someone to do, where the content of the advice is disjunctive. There is nothing in general problematic about disjunctive advice, or about the idea that one is guided by disjunctive advice. True, you cannot determine what to do if that is all you go by. But there is no reason to think that the rational requirement is all the subject has to go by.

Kolodny now argues against **Wide Process_K** by claiming merely that its second disjunct “makes no sense,” since “[y]our lack of an intention to ϕ has no content” (2007a, p. 379).¹⁴

3 Can we reason upstream?

One problem with Kolodny's argument against the wide-scope interpretation of process requirements is that his formulation, **Wide Process_K**, manifests an assumption that he does not persuasively defend: that the process governed by a rational requirement must be a process of reasoning from propositional contents. As I'll now argue, we can plausibly reject that assumption. I'll go on to consider Kolodny's explicit treatment of 'upstream' reasoning, showing that he fails to consider the species of akrasia at issue. I'll consider another aspect of Kolodny's argument in Sect. 6, showing that it rests on a conception of practical judgment that my argument give grounds for rejecting.

To see the problem with Kolodny's assumption, let's formulate **Wide Process** without it:

Wide Process Necessarily, if you judge at t that you ought to ϕ , but you do not intend at t to ϕ , then rationality requires you (EITHER to form going forward from t , *on the basis of your judgment*, the intention to ϕ , OR to revise going forward from t , *on the basis of your failure to intend to ϕ* , your judgment that you ought to ϕ).

The revised requirement has the virtue not only of making actual sense but of capturing the real basis of your reasoning in both disjuncts. In the first disjunct, you don't form the intention to ϕ on the basis of *the content* of your judgment that you ought to ϕ , as **Wide Process_K** puts it, but on the basis of *your judging* (or of your *having judged*) that you ought to ϕ . The content of your judgment is merely a proposition. What provides the rational basis for your intention is not that proposition but your judgment with that proposition as its content. This would be a mere quibble were it not for the fact that Kolodny's argument depends on this aspect of his formulation. His formulation obscures how you can—'going forward' in your reasoning—come to abandon your judgment that you ought to ϕ on the basis of your failure to form an intention to ϕ .¹⁵

¹⁴ In both **Wide Process_K** and in this quoted passage, Kolodny has “X” instead of “ ϕ .” Kolodny goes on (2007a, pp. 379–381) to consider the idea that you might reason upstream from *other believed contents* in the neighborhood of your failure to intend to ϕ . But, as he rightly notes, if that is how we construe the second disjunct of our **Wide Process**, and if you have no such other beliefs, then all we have left is the first disjunct, and our **Wide Process** collapses into **Narrow Process**.

¹⁵ I pursue this point toward a challenge to Kolodny's error-theoretic treatment of the normativity of rationality in “Reasons and Rational Coherence,” in preparation. But that challenge need play no role in the argument we're developing here.

You can do so because the failure is not a mere lack. You do not reason from your mere lack of an intention to ϕ , or from (as Kolodny unintelligibly puts it) the 'content' of this lack. You reason from an aspect of your *failure* to form the intention. Calling it a 'failure' acknowledges the bearing of a norm on your agency at this juncture. And the norm is indeed just the rational requirement under discussion, about which we are wondering whether it is best captured by **Narrow Process** or by **Wide Process**. So your failure, insofar as you fail to intend to ϕ while judging that you ought to ϕ , is the failure to satisfy this rational requirement. It is a breakdown in rationality, and the question for you is how to respond. Here is one way you might respond: unform your judgment that you ought to ϕ .

Let me quickly forestall some misunderstandings. Most crucially, my proposal is not that you reason either from the proposition *that* you judge that you ought to ϕ or from the proposition *that* you fail to intend to ϕ . I propose that you reason either from the judgment itself (with its propositional content) or from your specific failure—retaining that judgment—to form the cognate intention (with its content). The propositional contents of the judgment and of the intention are obviously a big part of what drives the reasoning, but another part of what drives the reasoning is the judgment itself or the failure to form the intention itself. We might say that the propositional element drives the reasoning via its participation in the attitudinal element. Just as the attitudes are propositional, so the propositions are attitudinal: they figure as the contents of attitudes the forming and failing to form which can amount to transitions that constitute stages in a process of reasoning. Reasoning proceeds *through* such transitions in attitude; it is not as such *about* transitions or attitudes.¹⁶

How then do the attitudes themselves (with their contents) drive the process of reasoning? My proposal is straightforward: through the relational attitudes of self-trust and self-mistrust. I'll explain the proposal at length in later sections, but let me emphasize two key aspects of it immediately. First, self-mistrust is a rich intrapersonal attitude and relation. When I say that you fail to intend as you judge through self-mistrust, I don't mean merely that you fail to form the intention. You might fail to form the intention in any number of ways: for example, through distraction, forgetfulness, confusion, perverse self-rebellion, or an interruption of your consciousness caused by bumping your head. In none of these cases would it make sense to say that you fail to intend as you judge because you mistrust this deliberative judgment. The failure to intend as you judge that I have in mind is specifically a failure that we can explain (or at least begin to explain) in terms of self-mistrust.¹⁷ Second, intrapersonal attitudes of self-trust and self-mistrust need not be, and typically are not, mediated by judgments that you are trustworthy or untrustworthy. You don't typically form an intention to ϕ because you judge that

¹⁶ Of course, one can also reason about one's attitudes. But then the transitions that constitute the process of reasoning have second-order contents, which is not the case we're considering.

¹⁷ By 'self-mistrust' I don't mean mistrusting yourself in general but merely in the specific instance at hand. A more general attitude of self-mistrust may emerge, but it need not. And I'm not talking about mistrusting your judgment *sans phrase*, but about mistrusting a specific judgment you've made on a specific matter at hand. By 'trust your judgment,' I'll always mean *trust a specific judgment*, never *trust your faculty of judgment*.

you are trustworthy in judging that you ought to ϕ , and mistrusting your judgment that you ought to ϕ need not involve the judgment that you are untrustworthy in so judging.¹⁸

The restriction to self-mistrust explains what's wrong with Kolodny's treatment of the possibility that one might reason in an 'upstream' direction. Consider this passage:

One can reason from the content of one's belief that one lacks sufficient reason to X to dropping one's intention to X . One can rationally resolve the conflict in this way. But one cannot reason from the content of one's intention to X to revising one's belief that one lacks sufficient reason to X . It is not reasoning to cling to what one judges to be an unfounded intention and to support it by revising one's belief about one's reasons. It is a kind of wishful thinking or self-deception. Consider, to a first approximation, how one would express this transition to oneself: 'The facts of my situation do not give me sufficient reason to X . I hereby commit to doing X . Thus, all along, the facts of my situation gave me sufficient reason to X .' I say 'to a first approximation,' because the 'thus' seems out of place. (Kolodny 2005, pp. 528–529)

There are several problems here. First, this is the core of Kolodny's argument against 'upstream' reasoning, and he discusses only the possibility of intending to ϕ while judging that you lack sufficient reason to ϕ .¹⁹ The cases that interest us, by contrast, are ones in which you judge that you have sufficient or conclusive reason to ϕ —that is, that you ought to ϕ , all things considered²⁰—without intending to ϕ . I do not claim that it is possible to intend to ϕ while judging that you lack sufficient reason to ϕ . In the cases of 'rational' akrasia on which we'll continue to focus, there's a failure to intend as you judge best. If there's also intending as you fail to judge best, that's a further case, or a further aspect of the case, and not one that I plan to discuss.²¹ Second, in claiming that such an 'upstream' transition must manifest wishful thinking or self-deception, Kolodny overlooks the possibility that I'm emphasizing: that the transition is grounded in self-mistrust. Third, if we stipulate that the transition is grounded in self-mistrust and that it reflects merely a failure to intend, we can explain the 'thus' in your reasoning by noting that you could make your reasoning explicit like this: 'I judge that the facts of my situation give me conclusive reason to ϕ . But I can't bring myself to trust that judgment by forming a practical commitment to ϕ . Thus, [here you abandon the judgment] it is

¹⁸ I'll devote the entirety of Sect. 6 to diagnosing confusions in the literature on this and related points. For now, let me simply stipulate that the relations of self-trust and self-mistrust that I'll be discussing need not be mediated by judgments of trustworthiness or untrustworthiness.

¹⁹ Kolodny's explicit argument against upstream reasoning continues through Sect. 1.8 (2005, pp. 534–539), where the emphasis likewise falls on this possibility and not on the possibility that we're investigating.

²⁰ This difference in formulation will matter in Sect. 6, where I'll argue that Kolodny's formulation is misleading in a crucial respect.

²¹ In Hinchman (2009) I argue from a similar emphasis on self-trust that intending to ϕ presupposes judging, all things considered, that you ought to ϕ . I thus do not regard this as a possible case.

not the case that the facts of my situation give me conclusive reason to ϕ .’ The reasoning proceeds through a tension in your thinking that is indeed rationally incoherent, since the ‘thus’ expresses your mistrustful rejection of the authority of your own act or attitude of deliberative judgment. But the ‘thus’ also resolves the tension: since you can’t bring yourself to form a commitment to ϕ , you abandon your judgment that you ought to ϕ . This is the proposal that I’ll defend—and of course clarify further—in what follows.

Such cases are not uncommon. You’re single and deliberating whether to invite your new romantic interest away for the weekend. Or you’re wondering whether to invest in a certain stock. Or whether to make a sudden career move. You reach the conclusion that you should go for it, that indeed you should make the decisive call right now. But as you reach for your phone you pull back. Does this irrational failure to commit to your judgment manifest nothing more than fear? If so, you’d be a coward to let it stand in the way. But it may mark a different attitude. It may manifest a sense that you’re simply not a good judge on this matter—at least, here and now. For a few moments your self-doubt makes you akratic: you judge that you ought to make the call but also resist that judgment. As you doubt yourself further, however, you find yourself wondering whether making the call is really such a good idea. That is, you find yourself redeliberating the matter. Your self-doubt has thus undone your judgment, but not by pointing to any reasons that you’d earlier overlooked. The self-doubt comes first and *causes* you to take another look at your reasons. Again, the transition could manifest second-order judgments about your own trustworthiness. But that it now how it proceeds in a typical case, and (as we’ll see from a different angle in Sect. 6) there are philosophical confusions in the idea that such a transition must involve second-order thinking.

Let me emphasize once again that while gripped by self-mistrust of the sort that I’m characterizing—that is, while mistrusting a judgment that you’ve made and retain—you are in an irrational state. The question is whether a rational *process* can take you through such a state. That the state is irrational shows nothing about the rationality of the process. Once we grant that judgment-to-commitment akrasia is possible, we concede that any time you form a judgment that you’ve not yet committed to you are in the same irrational state. It doesn’t follow that you cannot reason self-trustingly to an undertaking of the commitment. If we think you can, then we can ask whether that also goes for the other direction: can you rationally resolve your irrational state by letting self-mistrust unform your judgment? As we’ll see more fully in Sect. 5, we might regard the two processes as, rationally speaking, on a par: in some cases, the rational process is to form the commitment self-trustingly; in other cases, the rational process is to unform the judgment self-mistrustingly. In which direction should you now reason? Well, that depends on whether your judgment is from your own (possibly non-deliberative) perspective worthy of your trust.

The proposal is that abandoning a judgment *can* involve this species of self-mistrust. Of course, you can also abandon a judgment in the manner that Broome and Kolodny emphasize, by encountering a reason to think it mistaken without any self-mistrust. (Note that you can also follow through on a judgment because you’ve discovered a reason to think it correct. That is not to trust *that* judgment.) The proposal

is that registering a reason to think a judgment mistaken is not the only way to abandon the judgment. (Likewise, registering a reason to think a judgment correct is not the only way to follow through on the judgment.) You might satisfy the requirement by self-mistrustful reasoning that takes you, in Kolodny's term, 'upstream.'²²

4 How reasons-responsiveness requires a commitment to rational coherence

My objection to Kolodny's otherwise cogent critique of Broome reframes the question of 'rational' akrasia in a way that raises the larger issue from which we began. Doesn't describing your akrasia as in any way rational or reasonable rest on a conflation between two distinct species of rationality? Haven't we shifted from thinking of rationality in terms of coherence to thinking of it in terms of a responsiveness to reasons? We can bring the question of 'rational' akrasia into the purview of our emphasis on rational coherence by reformulating an argument persuasively pressed by Karen Jones.²³ Reflecting on what Jones gets right will help me elaborate the proposal that I outlined in the previous section.

Jones observes that earlier attempts to vindicate the possibility of rational akrasia, such as Arpaly's, appear to make the question depend on whether your emotions, habits or other exercisings of your reason-tracking sub-systems can in fact track your reasons as well as—and in some instances perhaps better than—your deliberative judgments. Jones agrees that they can but argues that resting with that affirmation could not amount to a vindication of rational akrasia. Such an emphasis on merely tracking your reasons overlooks the commitment that constitutes you as a rational agent—a commitment not merely to track your reasons but to be responsive to them, where this responsiveness most centrally involves a capacity for reflexive self-monitoring. Jones argues that rational akrasia is possible because it is possible to be thus responsive even when you do not act or choose in accordance with your all-things-considered judgment. Here is how she explains that possibility:

Regulated sub-systems that reason-track because we reason-respond can be no less operative in generating action when there is an all-things-considered judgment that opposes the action so produced. That is, the functioning of such sub-systems does not stop being *expressive of our commitment to rational guidance* just because there is now an opposing all-things-considered judgment. In some cases that all-things-considered judgment may be such that the agent would distrust it, if her *self-monitoring capacities* were functioning as they should. Thus the regulated sub-system can be more expressive of the agent's commitment to rational guidance than the all-things-considered judgment: the incontinent action can display the agent's commitment to rational

²² For an important caveat on the stream metaphor, see again note 1 above.

²³ In her 2003, Jones aims to refine the treatment of 'rational' akrasia Arpaly (2000, 2003), just as Arpaly aimed to refine the treatments in Frankfurt (1988) and McIntyre (1990). For a similar criticism of Arpaly's treatment, see Mason (2007).

guidance more fully than does the continent action. (2003, p. 196; all italics added)

This argument goes at least half-way toward the proposal that I sketched in Sect. 3, but it pulls up short with the claim that the akrasia is itself rational. We can clarify the relation between rational coherence and reasons-responsiveness by seeing why that claim does not sit well with Jones's own argument.

Jones does not appear to take seriously enough an aspect of her own formulation of the issue. She argues that if akrasia is rational, then it must express the agent's commitment to rational guidance, a commitment that she construes in terms of a self-monitoring capacity. But how exactly could an akratic agent express the commitment to rational guidance through self-monitoring? Not by merely presuming that the sub-system that she lets guide her is tracking her reasons better than her all-things-considered judgment. The commitment to rational guidance entails a further commitment to reconsider your judgment in such a case. Jones appears to overlook the importance of this latter commitment.

We can frame the problem by noting that Jones appears to overlook a region of dialectical space. In terms reminiscent of Arpaly's argument, she plausibly criticizes 'intellectualist' views of rationality for equating rationality with deliberative rationality. But it does not yield an intellectualist view of rationality to observe that your commitment to rational guidance rests on a commitment to find a way to bring your disposition to persist in akratic incoherence to bear on your judgment. Why are you finding it 'unthinkable' or otherwise so deeply difficult to do what you judge you have best reason to do? A commitment to rational guidance entails that you find a way to let this fact about your motivations weigh with you as you abandon your judgment—if that's how you upstreamishly resolve the matter—and then redeliberate how to proceed. That you find the action 'unthinkable' poses not merely an obstacle but a task for deliberative judgment. As Huck Finn akratically fails to commit to his judgment that he should betray Jim, Twain depicts him as deliberatively troubled by the irresolution—and possibly as changing his mind.²⁴ Without that part of the depiction, it would be difficult for readers to view Huck's akratic state of mind as manifesting the commitment to rational guidance that Jones plausibly views as necessary for personal agency.

Jones's emphasis on a commitment to self-monitoring does not therefore sit well with her claim that akrasia can be rational. Her appeal to rational self-monitoring brings to the fore a feature not of the akratic state itself but of the agent's attitude toward that state. Such an emphasis on self-monitoring ought to yield an emphasis on the fact that a rational agent cannot simply rest in an akratic state, because akrasia amounts to a state of incoherence from the agent's own point of view. Despite influential professions to the contrary, it is not really so difficult to understand how an agent could fall into such incoherence. A phenomenon that looks and feels like akrasia will be familiar to any agent who reflects honestly on his or her volitional

²⁴ For this reading, see Holton, "Inverse Akrasia and Weakness of Will," unpublished. (Bennett 1974 first cited Huck in this connection.)

failings.²⁵ What we cannot so easily understand is how a genuinely reasons-responsive agent could simply persist in such incoherence. What seems unintelligible, in other words, is not the state of akrasia as such but the failure to register the rational demand that you resolve it. If the verdict of your deliberative judgment just 'feels wrong' and you can't bring yourself to let it generate a practical commitment, then reasons-responsive self-monitoring seems to require that you reason 'upstream' to the abandonment of your judgment. I say 'seems to require' rather than 'requires' because it is also possible that you ought to try harder to get over that feeling. Rationality does not tell you whether to reason downstream or upstream. Rationality tells you only that you ought not to persist in akratic incoherence.

My principal disagreement with Jones and Arpaly concerns their broad conception of the issue posed by 'inverse' akrasia (as we may call it, setting aside whether the akrasia is rational). Though Jones adds an appropriate emphasis on self-monitoring, each thinks that the possibility of 'inverse' akrasia forces us to shift from thinking of rationality as coherence to thinking of rationality as a responsiveness to reasons, since what makes the akrasia praiseworthy, each thinks, lies in how the motives that resist judgment are nonetheless responsive to the agent's reasons. My view is that these cases force us to think about the species of coherence that informs rationality-as-coherence in a new way, in terms of self-trust. The problem with earlier treatments of 'inverse' akrasia is that they overlooked the demand that you be responsive not merely to your reasons but to your own status as rationally coherent. Such responsiveness amounts to a commitment to resolve any state of akratic incoherence, whether by following through on the judgment or by abandoning it. You thereby acknowledge the pertinent rational requirement as a wide-scope process requirement.

5 Why 'State or process?' is not a good question

How would such a vindication of 'upstream' reasoning bear on the debate between Broome and Kolodny? Drawing on Jones's core argument, we're calling the process one of 'reasoning' because it manifests a rational responsiveness. The capacity for self-monitoring that she emphasizes amounts to a responsiveness to the rational requirement codified by **Wide Process**, which codifies the rational obligation either to commit to your judgment or to treat your failure to commit to it as a basis for abandoning that judgment. As we'll now see, the distinction between 'state requirements' and 'process requirements' has no further use in clarifying this rational obligation, because **Wide Process** amounts to the requirement that you maintain a state of rational self-control or, in Aristotle's term, *enkrateia*.

Once again, what's distinctive of **Wide Process** is that it does not require that you form the intention to ϕ , given that you judge that you ought to ϕ . You can satisfy the requirement if, in the way described in Sect. 3, you abandon your judgment by reasoning from your failure to form the intention. This species of

²⁵ I am not, however, addressing the traditional problem of akrasia in this paper. (I offer a full treatment of akrasia in Hinchman (2009), explaining how akrasia is possible despite its apparent unintelligibility.)

rational responsiveness is responsive to your status as rationally coherent—the coherence that you manifest when you either trust your judgment or, equivalently, judge only in ways you won't mistrust. Since the self-trust or self-mistrust at issue can be aptly described as a state, the requirement can be aptly described as a state requirement. The requirement is that you not be in a rationally incoherent state.

So Broome's position is vindicated in spirit: judgment-to-commitment requirements have wide scope and can be aptly described as state requirements. But the state that they require of you—that of not manifesting such self-mistrust—is a state of having achieved the right sort of coherence in your reasoning. So they can also be aptly described as process requirements. We may conclude that the distinction between process and state requirements is crucially unclear. That's also one of Broome's conclusions (2007a, Sects. 5 and 6). But he does not even consider this conception of the required state, so his position is not vindicated in the letter.

Kolodny is right that it matters how you manage to achieve the required state: there is an important difference between abandoning your judgment through a process of self-mistrust and changing your mind through purely deliberative means. Assuming you've not yet performed the action in question, ϕ , mistrusting yourself in this way constitutively tends to reopen deliberation, and reopening deliberation whether to ϕ just amounts to abandoning your judgment that you ought to ϕ . Changing your mind in *this* respect need not involve any further judgment. All you need do is *undo* the judgment you have made, and such undoing is precisely where self-mistrust will tend to take you. On the other hand, the self-mistrust may strike you as perverse, and you may shake it off before it gets the better of you.

When you feel the force of a wide-scope 'process' requirement, your quandary is which way to reason: should you let your judgment do its work of informing practical commitment, or let your mistrust in that judgment do its work of reopening deliberation? We could try to view this difference in direction as marking the difference between two forms of reasoning: akratic and enkratic. We could say that both akrasia and enkrateia can manifest a commitment to reasons-responsive self-monitoring, by functioning as strategies for regaining rational coherence. But to speak thus of 'akratic reasoning' would be, I think, a mistake. Better to treat enkrateia—rational self-control—as having two dimensions, each of which can be mediated by akrasia.

Looking downstream from your best judgment, enkrateia requires both that you reasonably commit to your judgment and that you not judge in a way that you won't reasonably commit to. By 'reasonably' here I mean: in accordance with norms for reasonable self-trust. I lack space for a full treatment of these norms; I'm making a claim only about an aspect of their structure.²⁶ Enkrateia does not require that Huck Finn commit to his judgment that he ought to betray Jim, since that judgment is not—by Huck's own lights—trustworthy. Our sense that Huck's akrasia is rational derives from our sense that Huck's emotional resistance to betraying Jim ought to serve as a check on his judgment. In other cases, enkrateia requires that your judgment serve as a check on contrary emotions. Your best judgment is sometimes more trustworthy—again, by the lights of your own broader sensibility—than

²⁶ I examine norms of reasonable self-trust from several angles in Hinchman (2003, 2009, 2010, 2013).

conflicting emotions and habits, but there is no general reason why it must always be. There is thus no general reason why *enkrateia* should require of you only downstream reasoning. *Enkrateia* is the rational antidote to *akrasia*. But *akrasia* is merely the state of not committing to your best judgment; nothing about its structure indicates whether you ought to form that commitment or whether you ought instead to abandon that judgment. Which way *enkrateia* requires you to reason depends on whether that judgment is worthy of your trust.

One might suspect that I've smuggled a condition specifically requiring the tracking of reasons into my conception of the trustworthiness of judgment. Let me be explicit that I have not. I'm not assuming either that a failure to track your reasons must render your judgment untrustworthy or that untrustworthiness in your judgment must involve a failure to track your reasons. By 'trustworthy' I mean trustworthy from the agent's own point of view. We can imagine a Bizarro Huck who judges that he ought to help Jim escape but abandons that judgment when he finds he can't bring himself to act with such disregard for the law. With the right setup, that bout of upstream reasoning could manifest rationally praiseworthy mistrust of a rash judgment—not mere cowardice or confusion. We could agree that the mistrust does not track Bizarro Huck's reasons; we could agree that it isn't praiseworthy in the way of Huck's mistrust at this point in the actual novel. Still, we could regard Bizarro Huck as engaging in intelligible and even praiseworthy upstream reasoning to the abandonment of a judgment that is not trustworthy from his own point of view—however well it may track his reasons.²⁷

Another structural feature of *enkrateia* constrains deliberation itself. As we saw, *enkrateia* requires that you not judge when you won't reasonably commit to the judgment. We've been assuming that *enkrateia* would apply only when you've already made the judgment and the question is whether to abandon it in the face of *akrasia*. But what if you haven't yet judged and merely expect the *akrasia*? Working from one of Arpaly's examples, imagine you're about to form the all-things-considered judgment that you ought to live like a hermit for the next few weeks.²⁸ You expect that following through on this judgment will be extremely difficult, but it nonetheless strikes you as the thing to do in these circumstances. Should you forge

²⁷ From another angle, we can cite the role of trustworthiness in *enkrateia* to qualify Broome's strictures against bootstrapping. Worries about bootstrapping naturally apply to any case like Huck's, in which the untrustworthiness of the judgment is manifest from the agent's own point of view. We certainly would not want to say that Huck acquires a reason to betray Jim simply through having formed the judgment that he ought to betray Jim. But what if yet another variant on Huck—call him 'Schmuck'—were disposed not to mistrust the judgment that he ought to betray Jim? In that case we might want to say that because the judgment is trustworthy from Schmuck's narrowly subjective point of view, Schmuck acquires a 'subjective' reason to betray Jim—meaning merely that *enkrateia* requires this of Schmuck. If we don't want to speak of 'subjective reasons,' we can observe that Schmuck's judgment is no more *worthy* of his trust than Huck's. We agree that neither Huck nor Schmuck ought to betray Jim and therefore that neither ought to trust his judgment. By an argument that I pursue in "Reasons and Rational Coherence," in preparation, I'm inclined toward this latter position, on which his judgment's untrustworthiness—still from his own point of view, but not from the narrowly subjective point of view of what he is *disposed* to mistrust—ensures that he does not bootstrap his way into possessing a reason to betray Jim. But nothing in this paper requires that we decide the issue.

²⁸ Or say you're in the predicament of Lord Fawn as described by Frankfurt (1988, p. 183). My emphasis on self-trust might then replace Frankfurt's emphasis on "necessities of the will."

ahead, or should you instead let this expectation of akratic resistance prevent you from forming the judgment? Enkrateia may well require that you take the latter course. Note that taking the latter course would not be a matter of letting the expected akrasia weigh alongside other considerations as you deliberate. By hypothesis, you've weighed everything that you deem relevant to your deliberation, and you've drawn the deliberative conclusion that you ought to live like a hermit. So what you confront is not a fact that could convince you deliberatively not to form that judgment. If you refrain from forming the judgment on this basis, it could only be through a kind of upstream reasoning, from akrasia that is expected rather than actually the case.²⁹

6 Is practical judgment merely a belief about reasons?

This deliberative perspective on upstream reasoning raises especially sharply a worry that may have seemed pertinent from the outset of our inquiry: cannot an akratic recalcitrance to your own judgment count as evidence that you should not trust that judgment? Insofar as it manifests a responsiveness to evidence of your untrustworthiness in judging, then (as Kolodny notes) reasoning from such recalcitrance will count as downstream reasoning.³⁰ We can raise the worry about an actual bout of akratic incoherence, but it acquires a special force when the akrasia is merely expected. Say you regard yourself as having concluded deliberation with the judgment, all things considered, that you ought to ϕ . But now, thinking further, you feel the force of self-mistrust. Why not regard that further thinking as an extension of your deliberation, wherein your mistrust reveals that 'all things' were not considered, even by your own lights, when you regarded yourself as drawing that deliberative conclusion? What if you had expected that self-mistrust

²⁹ This complements a further observation: to form an all-things-considered practical judgment, you must expect, not necessarily that you *will* choose or intend accordingly, but that it would be *then rational*—that is, rational from the perspective of this future self—to undertake that practical commitment. This appears to be the judgment-to-commitment analogue of a point that is much discussed and debated about the commitment-to-action nexus: can you form the intention to ϕ when you believe you will not ϕ ? In Hinchman (2003, Sect. V), I argue that when you form an intention to ϕ , you need to believe not that you will ϕ but merely that you thereby make it non-deliberatively rational for your acting self to ϕ insofar as that self simply follows through on the intention. Each nexus is governed, looking forward, by the expectation of reasonable self-trust.

³⁰ This is Kolodny's argument in Sect. 1.8 of his 2005 (pp. 534–539). Each of the cases that he considers there—two "simple cases" and one more complex—counts as downstream reasoning because it presents your akratic resistance to judgment as generating evidence about your reasons to which it presents your judgment as responding. We've already dealt with two other aspects of Kolodny's treatment of upstream reasoning in that section. First, each of the cases that he considers frames the issue of upstream reasoning in the way that I criticized in Sect. 3 above. As we've seen, the question is not, as Kolodny poses it, whether you can reason upstream from an akratic intention to ϕ to abandoning your judgment that you lack sufficient reason to ϕ . The question is whether you can reason upstream from an akratic failure to ϕ to abandoning your judgment that you have sufficient (i.e. conclusive) reason to ϕ . Second, I am obviously not conflating the distinction between subjective and objective reasons in the way that Kolodny thinks likely to inform any purported vindication of upstream reasoning. The whole point of my argument in this paper is to shift the question of rational akrasia away from any conception of rationality as responsiveness to objective reasons and toward a conception of rationality as subjective coherence.

and therefore *not* regarded yourself as having closed deliberation? Mightn't you have treated the expected self-mistrust as deliberatively relevant evidence about your reasons? To deal with this worry we must consider more fully the model of practical judgment presupposed by Broome and Kolodny. We can thereby diagnose why they failed to anticipate my defense of **Wide Process**. And we can dispel the worry by seeing why we should reject that model of practical judgment.

Broome and Kolodny share a view of practical judgment as imposing (or at least importing) a species of commitment about which one could reason only downstream. Underlying the view are two more specific assumptions, both of which derive from an influential account of judgment pioneered by T. M. Scanlon.³¹ First, the view assimilates practical commitment to a species of doxastic commitment, since it equates your all-things-considered practical judgment that you ought to ϕ with a belief that you have conclusive reason to ϕ . Second, the view assimilates doxastic judgment to a kind of doxastic commitment, equating the doxastic judgment that p with the belief that p .³² I believe both assumptions are mistaken. First, though practical judgment includes a belief about your reasons, practical commitment is not commitment to it *qua* belief. Second, doxastic judgment is not the same as doxastic commitment.

Before pursuing these two objections, let's consider in more detail how Scanlon's equations fit together. On Scanlon's account of it, the rational force of a practical judgment figures as a species of doxastic commitment: by the first equation, your all-things-considered practical judgment that you ought to ϕ is the belief that you have conclusive reason to ϕ , which in turn, by the second equation, just amounts to the doxastic judgment that you have conclusive reason to ϕ .³³ If we accept Scanlon's equations we must notionally distinguish three things: (a) the doxastic judgment that you have conclusive reason to ϕ , (b) the doxastic commitment to that judgment that takes the form of a belief that you have conclusive reason to ϕ , and (c) the all-things-considered practical judgment that you ought to ϕ . If we equate

³¹ In his 1998 (pp. 25–30) Scanlon argues that we should restrict the term 'irrational' to cases in which your attitudes fail to conform to your judgments about reasons, but in his 2007 he merely distinguishes such *structural* irrationality from the *substantive* species of irrationality that I'm calling 'deliberative.' Since Scanlon agrees with Broome and Kolodny that only substantive (ir)rationality traffics in reasons, one could express my conclusion as the thesis that, properly understood, even structural (ir)rationality is substantive. But that formulation would be misleading. My principal aim is not to undermine the distinction between structural and substantive species of rationality but to recast it in a way that gives the concept of reasoning crucial work to do on both sides of the distinction. (Note that although Kolodny, citing Scanlon (2005, p. 560, n. 49), speaks of a 'belief' about evidence or reasons (e.g. 2005, p. 521), rather than (with Scanlon) of a 'judgment,' that merely reflects the fact that Scanlon does not himself draw the sharp distinction between judgment and belief on which I'm insisting.)

³² Broome's entire discussion in his 2007b assumes that a plausible 'enkratic condition' would link commitment (whether doxastic or practical) to a belief about your reasons. And Kolodny's discussion of the 'core requirements' in his 2005, Sect. 5, explicitly embraces both assumptions.

³³ In his 2007 Scanlon distinguishes "attitude-directed" from "content-directed" judgments (pp. 90–91), but the latter are nonetheless about reasons; what distinguishes them is merely that they are not *explicitly* about reasons *for other judgments*. He makes the distinction in reply to a worry that attitude-directed judgments are "somewhat artificial" (p. 91): it's more natural to "direct our attention to the world" when we deliberate rather than to our further judgments. That's importantly true. But for our purposes it won't matter on which side of this distinction a given judgment lies.

(c) with (b), we have to remember that the only commitment in (b) is to (a). As far as the account goes, insofar as practical judgment embodies a commitment, it is not a practical commitment. Even if you are committed to (a), the doxastic judgment, by virtue of (b), the doxastic commitment, you are not yet committed to (c), the distinctively practical judgment. If we equate (c) with (b), a doxastic commitment, we should be explicit that neither of these amounts to a practical commitment—that is, to a choice or intention. We might try to view practical commitment as commitment to the doxastic commitment, but, as we'll see, that approach runs into problems.

We can begin to see the problems by considering how Scanlon's blurring of the distinction between practical and doxastic commitment figures in his argument against the possibility of upstream reasoning. Though Scanlon concedes that you may go irrational in the gap between practical judgment and intention, his view of how you are committed to a practical judgment ensures the illegitimacy of reasoning upstream. Here's how he puts it:

[I]t would be irrational for an agent to avoid the incompatibility between judging herself to have compelling reason to do *A* at *t* and her not deciding to do this by abandoning the former judgment unless she saw some reason to revise this assessment. And it is difficult to imagine a case in which she could take her failure to decide to do *A* at *t* as a consideration bearing on the merits of doing it. (Scanlon 2007, p. 96)³⁴

Note how Scanlon treats the doxastic commitment at the core of a practical judgment—in our taxonomy, equating (c) with (b)—as committing you to a downstream-looking stance toward the question of practical commitment. Even if the practical judgment does not on its own commit you practically, he argues, it determines how you can reason through the question of practical commitment. You cannot reason upstream, the argument goes, because your practical judgment commits you doxastically, and this doxastic commitment cannot be undone unless you 'see some reason'—that is, some downstream-looking deliberative reason—to revise it. That in turn commits you to reasoning only downstream about your practical commitment.

Why cannot Scanlon's agent simply mistrust her judgment? Why must the mistrust involve a downstream assessment of her reasons? Scanlon seems to share the worry with which we began this section: such self-mistrust must register as evidence about your reasons, about which you can reason only downstream. Assuming, with Scanlon, that your practical judgment that you ought to ϕ manifests doxastic commitment to the judgment that you have conclusive reason to ϕ , it follows that a failure to commit to—that is, choose or intend in accordance with—your practical judgment amounts to a failure to commit *practically* where you are nonetheless committed doxastically. If, in accordance with the worry, you must view this failure of practical commitment as giving you evidence about your reasons, then you must count as reopening the doxastic deliberation informing your

³⁴ Scanlon uses 'decision' to mark a practical commitment.

doxastic judgment that you have conclusive reason to ϕ . That amounts to a downstream assessment of your reasons.

We can use Scanlon's own framework to explain why the worry is confused. In the *status quo ante* you are doxastically committed to a judgment about your reasons: you do believe that you have conclusive reason to ϕ . You could, of course, undo that commitment through self-mistrust: mistrust now in the doxastic judgment that you have conclusive reason to ϕ . (I'll discuss that different case presently.) But it simply does not make sense to say that you 'mistrust' a belief.³⁵ What we're trying to say is that you mistrust the practical bearing of your belief: you mistrust it not *qua* belief but *qua* practical judgment. We're trying to say that you mistrust your practical judgment without mistrusting your doxastic judgment. But it follows from the fact that you do not mistrust your doxastic judgment that you *do* believe that you have conclusive reason to ϕ . The formulations implicitly concede that you do not regard the self-mistrust as giving you evidence about your reasons.

What the practical mistrust undoes is not that belief but its bearing on your choice or intention. It may take a further step, and perhaps a further degree of self-mistrust, now doxastic rather than purely practical, for you to abandon the doxastic judgment that informs that belief. Until you abandon that judgment, you may be stuck judging that you have conclusive reason to ϕ while feeling no rational pressure to choose or intend to ϕ . And if you don't mistrust this doxastic judgment, you may even be stuck *believing* that you have conclusive reason to ϕ while feeling no rational pressure to choose or intend to ϕ . But that's just to say that a practical judgment is not *simply* a belief about your reasons. A practical judgment may include a belief about your reasons, but it gives that belief a further practical orientation. The practical orientation is what brings you under **Wide Process**. What shows that there is this further practical question, beyond any mere belief about your reasons, is that you can persist in your best practical judgment that you ought to ϕ —that is, continue to believe that you have conclusive reason to ϕ —while nonetheless mistrusting that practical judgment. Since you don't thereby mistrust your belief—again, that simply doesn't make sense—you must be mistrusting an element in the practical judgment that is not included in the belief.

What should we say about the odd predicament in which you believe that you have conclusive reason to ϕ without that practical element, so you fall short of judging, all things considered, that you ought to ϕ ? Well, the belief entails that you ought to make that practical judgment. But the belief is not itself a judgment that you ought to make that practical judgment. The belief is second-order, and it concerns your grounds for making the judgment. You might in the same spirit believe that you have conclusive epistemic reasons for the belief that p , yet fail to form the latter belief. There's an inconsistency here, but it doesn't involve the violation of the rational requirements that we're discussing in this paper. The requirements of rationality that we're discussing address the gaps that emerge within first-order thinking between judgment and commitment and further

³⁵ As Wittgenstein epigrammatically observes, "One can mistrust one's own senses, but not one's own belief" (1956, p. 190). And as Richard Moran observes, commenting on this passage, "this must mean not that I take my beliefs to be so much more trustworthy than my senses, but that neither trust nor mistrust has any application here" (2001, p. 75).

follow-through. We aren't discussing the requirements to keep your lower-order attitudes in line with higher-order attitudes about your grounds.

Let me elaborate what I said earlier about a gap between doxastic judgment and belief at the same order—a gap that is governed by the doxastic analogue of the rational requirement that we're discussing. How might a mistrustful reluctance to commit lead you, through upstream reasoning, to abandon your doxastic judgment? Though I lack space to pursue the issue, everything I've said about the self-trust dynamic on the practical side seems just as importantly true of the doxastic side. Just as judging that you ought to ϕ does not ensure that you choose or intend to ϕ , so judging that p does not ensure that you believe that p . If your self-mistrust gets the better of you, you thereby count as reopening deliberation, which entails that you've abandoned your judgment that p . But here again: that counts as upstream reasoning. Since judgment-to-commitment requirements have wide scope even in the doxastic case, you can satisfy them by reasoning your way from a failure to commit to your judgment to its abandonment. We can accurately describe the self-mistrust that gets the better of you as a failure to believe that p from which you reason back upstream.³⁶

It is easy to misinterpret these self-trust and self-mistrust relations, whether doxastic or practical, if one follows Scanlon and equates judgment with a belief that you have reasons. We can see the problem most clearly by elaborating what I listed earlier as a second objection to Scanlon's account of judgment. If your doxastic judgment is the belief that there is conclusive reason or evidence for p , and your doxastic commitment is the belief that p , then your doxastic commitment has a different content from the judgment informing it. It thus becomes difficult to understand how your commitment could be a commitment to what you've judged. In the practical case, the parallel discrepancy is not so obviously a problem. Because we express the content of an intention with a verb alone—you intend *to* ϕ —it is not so mysterious how in forming the intention you commit to your practical judgment, whether we formulate the content of the latter in terms of a simple 'ought' or more elaborately with Scanlon. But if one starts from the doxastic, analyzing each with Scanlon, it becomes mysterious how you could commit to a judgment in either case, and one may simply lose sight of the self-trust dynamic. Of course, it does make sense to say that you commit abstractly to p or to ϕ ing, but the point of saying that is merely to individuate the commitment by specifying its content. This does not say what you commit to in terms of the self-trust dynamic; this is not the commitment that could lapse in akrasia. When commitment is considered as the counter to akrasia, what you commit to is what you could have mistrusted: not the content of the commitment but the judgment that informs it.

I suspect that the assumptions about judgment that I'm rejecting express a more fundamental 'internalist' thesis about the authority of judgment over the attitudes that it governs: that a judgment must somehow already 'include' the commitments that it governs, lest we be forced to posit an 'externally' mediating act or attitude whereby the judgment is made practically or doxastically effective.³⁷ I have

³⁶ I pursue this argument fully in "Judging as Inviting Self-Trust," in preparation.

³⁷ For one such an 'externalist' thesis, see Wallace (2001, pp. 9–10).

elsewhere argued that the internalism in question can be vindicated without the assumptions (Hinchman 2009). The bare claim that rational requirements are wide process requirements does not presuppose internalism, but it is important to see that it need not involve a conception of choice or intention as a faculty of willing. The wide-scope interpretation of *enkrateia* presupposes merely that the perspective of judgment does not simply determine the perspective of choice or intention (or, in a doxastic case, belief) in the dynamic of self-trust that it initiates. While *akrasia* is always as such irrational, the problem that it poses for the agent admits of more than one genuine solution.

Acknowledgments I'm grateful to T. M. Scanlon, Paulina Sliwa, Jesse Summers, Valerie Tiberius, and an anonymous referee for helpful comments on a previous draft, and to audience members at the 2012 NUSTEP conference at Northwestern University for helpful discussion.

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