

The Enkratic Requirement

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Abstract: Agents are enkratic when they intend to do what they believe they should. That rationality requires you to be enkratic is uncontroversial, yet you may be enkratic in a way that does not exhibit any rationality on your part. Thus, what I call the *enkratic requirement* demands that you be enkratic in the right way. In particular, I will argue that it demands that you base your belief about what you should do and your intention to do it on the same considerations. The idea is that, if you base your belief and your intention on different considerations, then you are inconsistent in your treatment of those considerations as reasons. The enkratic requirement demands that you be enkratic by treating considerations consistently as reasons.

1 Introduction

Agents are enkratic when they intend to do what they believe they should and are akratic when they do not intend to do what they believe they should. That rationality requires you to be enkratic is uncontroversial.¹ But as we will see, you may be enkratic in a way that does not exhibit any rationality on your part. Thus it is possible to be enkratic in the wrong way, and so what I will call the *enkratic requirement* demands that you be enkratic in the right way. The aim of this paper is to find a formulation of this requirement that best captures this demand.

In particular, I will argue that the enkratic requirement demands that you be enkratic as a result of a certain relationship obtaining between your reasons for your normative beliefs (that is, your beliefs about what you should do) and your reasons for your intentions. After all, you form your beliefs and intentions in response to reasons. So if rationality demands a certain relationship to obtain between your normative beliefs and your intentions, we can expect it to demand a

corresponding relationship between your reasons for them. A successful formulation of the enkratic requirement will specify this relationship, and more generally will help to explain the relationship between being enkratic and responding rationally to reasons.

Before proceeding, a few preliminary points are in order. First, whether we should identify enkreteia and akrasia with strength of will and weakness of will is debatable. For example, Holton (1999) argues that weakness of will is a matter not of being akratic but of irrationally revising intentions, and Dodd (2007) argues that it is a matter of failing to carry out prior intentions. But we need not engage in this debate here: my concern in this paper is to understand the relationship between normative judgments and intentions, which is an important issue even if it is distinct from issues concerning strength and weakness of will. An understanding of the rationality of enkrateia is worth obtaining even if it does not also yield an understanding of the rationality of strength of will.²

Second, I take it that rationality only requires that you intend to do what you believe you ought to do, and does not require that you actually do it. This is because not all failures to do it are failures of rationality; for example, you might fail to do it because you are clumsy, or because you have a rational but false belief about how to do it. In these cases, you may exhibit the rationality associated with enkreteia yet fail to do what you believe you should. It is better, then, to define enkreteia and akrasia in terms of the relationship between agents' normative beliefs and their intentions, rather than between their normative beliefs and their actions.

Finally, my argument relies on the assumption that a consideration is a reason for an intention just in case it is a reason for the intended action. However, while this assumption is true of what we may call object-given reasons, it is not true of what we may call state-given reasons. For an intuitive sense of the difference between these two kinds of reasons, consider the following two reasons I might have for intending to drink a mild toxin: first, it may be the only antidote to an

otherwise deadly poison; second, a wealthy eccentric may offer me a large sum of money simply to form the intention to drink the toxin and will pay me regardless of whether I actually drink it.⁴ In the first case, I have a reason to intend to drink the toxin because I have a reason to drink it; since the reason for the intention depends on properties of its object, this is an object-given reason. The second case is more controversial, but arguably I have a reason to form the intention to drink the toxin even though I have no reason to actually drink it; the reason for the intention does not depend on the properties of its object, and so is a state-given reason. I will therefore limit the scope of this paper's argument to object-given reasons.

2 Becoming Enkratic

In this section, I will consider two formulations of the enkratic requirement and show that neither is satisfactory. In doing so, I will argue first that simply being enkratic does not necessarily display any rationality on your part, which in turn shows that rationality requires that you be enkratic in the right way. Second, I will argue that being enkratic in the right way does not consist in basing your intentions on your normative beliefs. We will then be in a position to see that the enkratic requirement concerns agents' reasons for their normative beliefs and intentions.

Being Enkratic. We may begin by considering the idea that the enkratic requirement demands only that one intend to do what one believes one should.⁵ Since this formulation holds that simply being enkratic is not only necessary but also sufficient for satisfying the enkratic requirement, we may call it Being Enkratic.

To see why Being Enkratic does not fully capture the enkratic requirement, it will first help to consider more carefully why enkreteia does not consist in actually doing what you believe you should. Suppose that although Sara is feeling quite tipsy and believes that she should only have non-alcoholic beverages for the rest of the evening, she decides to have another beer anyway.

However, she inadvertently picks out a non-alcoholic beer, and so ends up doing exactly what she believes she should. If we said that enkrateia consists in actually doing what you believe you should, then we would have to count her as enkratic. Yet she seems to display the sort of irrationality exhibited by akrasia – her intention responds neither to what she takes to be her strongest practical reasons nor to her normative belief – and it is only by accident that she does what she believes she should. We have avoided this problem, however, because we have defined enkrateia as intending to do what you believe you should, and this allows us to count her as akratic.

In an analogous way, you can also display the sort of irrationality exhibited in akrasia even when you satisfy Being Enkratic. Suppose that Ryan believes that he should go on a diet and begin to exercise in order to improve his health, but because he is lazy he does not intend to do so. Thus he is akratic, and his intention responds neither to his normative belief nor to what he takes to be his strongest reasons for action. But now suppose that his boss tells him about her new diet and exercise regimen and hints that he ought to try it. He has a tendency to be obsequious that he believes he should resist, yet he begins the regimen anyway. He now intends to do what he believes he should, and thus satisfies Being Enkratic. But his intention is no more responsive to his reasons and his normative belief than it was when he was akratic. On the contrary, it is a product of his obsequiousness, which, he recognizes, is not a source of reasons. Thus, even though he is enkratic, his intention displays the same sort of irrationality that it did when he was akratic, and this shows that Being Enkratic does not capture the enkratic requirement.

One may try to defend Being Enkratic from this counterexample by appealing to the fact that the enkratic requirement is *local* rather than *global*. Global requirements concern what is rationally required of you all things considered, while local requirements concern what is rationally required of you in light of a subset of your mental states. The enkratic requirement is

generally taken to be a local requirement; after all, you can satisfy it even if you do not believe or intend as you rationally should, all things considered. For example, one need not be a nutritionist to see the folly of certain fad diets, yet many people believe they should go on one of them and intend to do so. Many of these people display the sort of rationality associated with *enkreteia* (at least for a while) even if they do not believe or intend as they should, all things considered. The *enkratic* requirement is therefore local rather than global. In Ryan's case, we have two belief-intention pairs to evaluate: his belief that he should begin a diet and exercise regimen and his intention to do so, and his belief that he should avoid being obsequious and his intention to do something obsequious. Because the *enkratic* requirement is local, one might argue, we may assess these two pairs independently, and in particular we may grant that Ryan is irrational with respect to the latter pair and still claim that the former pair satisfies the *enkratic* requirement. Since this assessment is consistent with Being *Enkratic*, Ryan's case would not be a counterexample.

Unfortunately, this defense misses the main point that Ryan's case illustrates. Just as it is a happy accident that Sara actually does what she believes she should do, so it is a happy accident that Ryan intends to do what he believes he should do; like her action, his belief responds neither to his normative judgment nor to his reasons for that judgment. This is why his *enkreteia* fails to exhibit any rationality. In contrast, fad dieters' *enkreteia* need not be the result of a happy accident; on the contrary, their intentions may well be based on their normative judgments or on their reasons for those judgments. This is why their *enkreteia* may exhibit rationality even though they are not rational all things considered.

This point may be further illustrated by considering a case of epistemic *enkreteia*, which consists in believing what you think you should believe. The rational requirement that you be epistemically *enkratic* is presumably local, and yet to be rational you must be epistemically *enkratic* in the right way. For example, suppose that, after running a series of tests, my highly

qualified doctor tells me that I have only a few months to live. Even though I know I should believe what he says, I may be unable to bring myself to do so. Shortly thereafter, my tarot card reader tells me that I have only a few months to live. Though I know I should disregard such superstitions, I nevertheless succumb to them, and so I finally come to believe that I have a few months to live. As a result of a happy accident, then, I have come believe what I think I should believe, and so have become epistemically enkratic. Yet surely I do not thereby display any epistemic rationality.

To satisfy the enkratic requirement, you must of course become enkratic. But simply being enkratic is not enough: you must also be enkratic in the right way. An adequate formulation of the enkratic requirement will therefore specify the additional conditions that suffice for exhibiting the sort of rationality associated with enkrateia.

Normative Guidance. Perhaps the enkratic requirement demands that you base your intentions on your normative beliefs. On this view, it is not enough that you intend to do what you believe you should; rather, you must intend to do it *because* you believe you should. That is, your intentions should be guided by or responsive to your normative beliefs; if they are not, they are irrational.⁶ Call this formulation of the enkratic requirement Normative Guidance.

This formulation seems plausible when we consider standard cases of akrasia, such as those in which you believe you have had enough alcohol already yet you akratically decide to have another beer, or you believe you should begin a diet and exercise regimen yet you akratically decide not to do so. It is clear in these cases that your intention (which you form when you make your decision) is irrational and is not guided by your normative belief. It also makes sense of Ryan's case: although he intends to do what he believes he should, his intention is guided not by his normative belief but by his subservient deference to his boss. According to Normative Guidance, this is why he exhibits the same sort of irrationality typically exhibited by akratic

agents. Finally, Normative Guidance is compatible with the idea that the enkratic requirement is local rather than global. We can say that forming the appropriate intention in response to a normative belief is rational even if the normative belief is not, and so you may satisfy Normative Guidance even if your normative belief and intention are not rational, all things considered.

Normative Guidance is plausible, however, only if we can explain why you should adjust your intentions to match your normative beliefs. One possibility is to say that facts about what you should do are reasons: the fact that you should do A is a reason to do A, the fact that you should do B is a reason to do B, and so on. Of course, the rationality of your beliefs and intentions depends not on the reasons that are in fact present, but on the reasons you believe to be present. After all, you cannot respond to reasons of which you are unaware, and rationality does not demand that you do so. And it is rational of you to respond appropriately if you believe reasons to be present even if in fact they are not. So, if facts about what you should do are reasons, then it is rational of you to (intend to) do A if you believe you should, and to (intend to) do B if you believe you should, and so on. In short, if facts about what you should do are reasons, we could explain why it would be rational of you to adjust your intentions to match your normative beliefs, as Normative Guidance demands.⁷

However, it is implausible that facts about what you should do are themselves reasons. Practical reasons explain *why* you should do something, and the fact that you should do something does not itself explain why you should do it. As Julia Markovits puts it,

the statement ‘A ought to ϕ ’ simply reports the fact that A has (other) overriding reasons to ϕ .

If we were to take the fact that A ought to ϕ as an additional reason for A to ϕ , we would be guilty of double-counting the reasons A has to ϕ . (2010: 207)

Thus, we cannot explain why you should adjust your intentions to match your normative beliefs by saying that the latter are reasons. If Normative Guidance is to be plausible, we will need to find some other explanation.

We might try to explain it by adopting the following account of practical reasoning. In response to (what you take to be) reasons for action, you form the belief that you should do a certain action. Then, if you are rational, you will form the intention to do the action. This view can allow that practical reasons consist not in facts about what you should do but in the facts that explain why you should do it. But it holds that responding to practical reasons consists first in forming a normative judgment, which then guides the formation of an intention. On this view, your normative beliefs mediate your intentions' response to (what you take to be) reasons. This gives us Normative Guidance without the claim that facts about what one should do are themselves reasons.

This account, however, is undermined by what Arpaly and Schroeder (1999: 162-4) call *inverse akrasia*.⁸ To illustrate the idea, suppose that Alex is a nursing school student. His grades have been slipping, however, partly because he is not as talented as other students, but mostly because his interest in nursing has faded. He has lost his idealistic and romanticized view of healing the sick, and now thinks that nursing will be frustrating and tedious. He has been spending more and more time working at the shop of a friend who specializes in repairing high-end motorcycles, and it appears that he has a good deal of talent at this. In short, he has good reason to believe that he should quit nursing school and take up motorcycle maintenance. Yet he continues to believe that he ought to finish school: he still thinks that nursing would be a respectable career, and that you should in any case finish what you start. One day, however, Alex decides to quit school and work full-time at his friend's shop. Overall, he thinks he is making a mistake, though he felt relieved as soon as he made his decision.⁹

Alex is akratic; he has clearly failed to adjust his intention to match his normative belief. Yet not only does he intend to do what he should in fact do, he intends to do it for the very reasons that explain why he should do it. Given his evident talents and interests, he is better off working on motorcycles than nursing, his worries about respectability and resoluteness notwithstanding. And these are precisely the concerns that motivated him. Evidently, then, intentions can respond to reasons without the mediation of normative beliefs.

This is not to deny that the rationality of your intentions depends in some way on your beliefs about your reasons. But since normative facts (i.e., facts about what you should do) are not themselves reasons, the rationality of your intentions does not depend on your beliefs about them. To illustrate the point, contrast Alex's case with a case in which a poisonous snake has just bitten the friend with whom you are hiking, and the stuff in Vial 1 is an antidote while the stuff in Vial 2 is a toxin. These facts are reasons for you to give your friend the stuff in Vial 1, not Vial 2; they explain why you should do the former and not the latter. But if you have things backwards – if you believe the stuff in Vial 1 is a toxin and the stuff in Vial 2 is an antidote – then it would be irrational of you to give your friend the stuff in Vial 1 even though there is reason to do so, and rational of you to give your friend the stuff in Vial 2 even though there is no reason to do so. This is because your beliefs about the facts that constitute reasons in this case are mistaken, and so you are in no position to base your intention on them. In contrast, Alex's beliefs about the facts that constitute reasons in his situation – his assessment of his talents and interests, for example – are not mistaken, and so he is able to base his intention on those facts, which is exactly what he does.

Cases of inverse akrasia show not only that the account of practical reasoning we are considering is mistaken, but also that we will be hard pressed to find any explanation for Normative Guidance. Naturally, from your own perspective it will seem that responding to your practical reasons requires adopting an intention that matches your normative belief, and this is

why it seems plausible to say that your intentions should respond to your normative beliefs.¹⁰ But this does not mean that responding to practical reasons requires adopting a matching intention; on the contrary, as Alex's case demonstrates, your intention can respond to what are in fact practical reasons even when it does not respond to your normative belief. Adjusting your intention to match your belief would then amount to abandoning an intention that is in fact supported by reasons in favor of one that is not. And it is hard to see why rationality would demand this.

Moreover, just as it is hard to see why agents should adjust their intentions to match their normative beliefs, it is also hard to see why Alex's intention is anything less than fully rational, all things considered. Not only does he have the intention he would have were he fully rational, but the reasons on which it is based are those on which it would be based were he fully rational. It is therefore difficult to justify the claim that it violates any rational requirement, whether local or global. Of course, this is not to say that his akratic state is fully rational; after all, his normative belief is irrational given the reasons available to him. Rather, it is to say that akratic intentions are not always irrational even if akrasia itself always is.

Our discussion so far shows that there are at least three desiderata for a formulation of the enkratic requirement. First, it cannot demand merely that one be enkratic; it must specify a way of being enkratic that explains why certain enkratic agents like Ryan are irrational in the same way that akratic agents are. Second, it must avoid entailing that akratic intentions are always irrational even as it entails that akrasia always is. Being Enkratic fails to satisfy the first of these, and Normative Guidance fails to satisfy the second; both are therefore inadequate. To these two desiderata we may add a third: an adequate formulation must specify a local rather than global requirement.

3 The Enkratic Requirement

Being enkratic, of course, consists in having a normative belief and a matching intention, and you form these states in response to what you take to be reasons. This suggests that being enkratic in the right way may be explained in terms of responding to reasons in the right way. In particular, we need to explain how your intentions and normative beliefs can respond to reasons in such a way that the former match the latter even though the latter do not represent reasons for the former.

Shared Reasons. How might we explain this? In particular, how could responding rationally to the available reasons lead you to be enkratic, if we reject the accounts of practical reasons and reasoning considered above? We can explain it by specifying a relationship between practical and theoretical reasons that entails that responding to reasons rationally results in your being enkratic. The following specifies such a relationship:

Shared Reasons: A set of considerations constitutes sufficient reason for believing that you should do A if and only if it provides conclusive reason for intending to do A.

The underlying idea is that a consideration supports doing an action just in case it supports a favorable normative belief about doing it. For example, if a consideration is a reason to believe that an action is choiceworthy, then it is also a reason to choose it.¹¹ However, we are interested here in beliefs about what you ought to do, not beliefs about what is choiceworthy. And the sheer fact that you have a reason to do an action is not enough to make it the case that you ought to do it; for that, you need a conclusive reason to do it. Similarly, the sheer fact that you have a reason to believe that you ought to do it is not enough to make your belief justified; for that, you need a sufficient reason. This gives us Shared Reasons.

Shared Reasons implies that if both your normative beliefs and your intentions respond rationally to reasons, then you will be enkratic; contrapositively, if you are akratic, then either your normative belief or your intention (or both) has failed to respond rationally. To see this,

recall Sara, who feels tipsy and so believes that she should drink only non-alcoholic beverages for the rest of the evening, yet intends to have a beer anyway. Assuming for simplicity that her tipsy feeling constitutes a sufficient reason for her normative belief, Shared Reasons implies that it constitutes a conclusive reason for her to drink only non-alcoholic beverages, and hence to intend to do so. Her failure to adopt this intention, then, amounts to a failure to respond rationally to reasons. Contrast her case with that of Alex, whose interests and talents lead him to drop out of nursing school even though he believes he should stay in school. Assuming that these are conclusive reasons to drop out of school, Shared Reasons implies that he has sufficient reason to believe that he ought to quit. His failure to adopt this belief, then, amounts to a failure to respond rationally to reasons. Thus, when you are akratic, either your normative belief or your intention has failed to respond rationally to reasons.

Next, suppose that Sara and Alex respond rationally to reasons. Sara has sufficient reason to believe that she should drink only non-alcoholic beverages, and Shared Reasons implies that she also has conclusive reason to intend to do so. Thus, were she to respond rationally to reasons, she would form this intention and thereby become enkratic. Similarly, Alex has conclusive reasons for dropping out of nursing school, and Shared Reasons implies that these are also sufficient reasons for him to believe he should do so. Thus, were he to respond rationally to reasons, he would form this belief and thereby become enkratic.

Shared Reasons is plausible in part because it offers an attractive explanation of the rationally ideal way for agents to be enkratic, namely by being rationally responsive to the available reasons. This certainly seems to be the rationally ideal way for akratic agents like Sara and Alex to be enkratic. It also seems to be why Ryan – who believes he should diet and exercise for health reasons yet intends to do so only to please his boss – is not enkratic in the rationally ideal way. Since the considerations to which his belief responds are different from those to which his

intention responds, Shared Reasons implies that either his normative belief or his intention fails to respond rationally to reasons. Specifically, if health considerations are sufficient reasons for his normative belief, then because his intention fails to respond to them, it fails to respond to conclusive reasons. And if pleasing his boss is a conclusive reason for him to diet and exercise, then because his normative belief fails to respond to it, it fails to respond to sufficient reasons. Suppose, however, that he becomes rationally responsive to reasons. Then if health considerations are sufficient reasons for his belief, then his intention will respond to them as well, and if pleasing his boss is a conclusive reason for his intention, then his normative belief will respond to it as well. He would then be enkratic in the rationally ideal way.

The Enkratic Requirement. We have seen that the enkratic requirement demands that you be enkratic in the right way, but we have not yet determined what the right way is. We have also seen that, given Shared Reasons, the rationally ideal way for you to be enkratic is to be rationally responsive to reasons. We might therefore formulate the enkratic requirement as the demand that you be enkratic by being rationally responsive to the available reasons. This would be a satisfying result: it would reduce the rationality of *enkreteia* to the rationality of responding appropriately to the available reasons.

Unfortunately, this formulation – which we may call Reason Responsiveness – is too strong. In effect, it holds that you satisfy the enkratic requirement only if your normative belief and intention are rational, all things considered; in other words, it implies that the enkratic requirement is global rather than local. And this is implausible, as the example of those who go on fad diets showed. We therefore need to find some other formulation.

Yet the idea that you should become enkratic by responding to reasons in a certain way is promising. Consider, then, the following:

Coordination: Your belief that you should do A and your intention to do A are coordinated if and only if they respond to (i.e., are based on) the same considerations.

Coordination is clearly an extension of Shared Reasons. The latter is based on the idea that, roughly, a consideration is a reason for a normative belief just in case it is a reason for the matching intention. This means that agents who respond rationally to reasons will base their normative beliefs and their intentions on the same considerations and hence will coordinate them. But of course your beliefs and intentions can be coordinated even when the considerations to which they respond are not (good) reasons. Thus, they can be coordinated even when they do not respond rationally to reasons.

We may formulate the enkratic requirement as the demand that your enkrateia result from your normative beliefs and intentions being coordinated; call this formulation Enkratic Coordination. The case for this formulation depends partly on showing that rationality does in fact demand that you coordinate your normative beliefs and intentions, and partly on showing that this demand is identical to the enkratic requirement. Now, there is a sense in which you are consistent when you coordinate your normative beliefs and intentions, and this is why it is plausible to suppose that rationality demands that you coordinate them. To see this, suppose that a consideration R is a reason for x if and only if it is a reason for y . Then your treatment of R is consistent in the relevant sense just in case you either treat it as a reason for both x and y or as a reason for neither. And it is plausible that rationality demands that you be consistent in this sense. But if a consideration is a reason for a normative belief just in case it is a reason for the matching intention, then you treat that consideration consistently just in case both your normative belief and your intention are responsive to it, or neither is. Thus, you treat considerations consistently as reasons only if your normative belief and your intention are coordinated. Rationality therefore demands that they be coordinated.

Moreover, by identifying this demand with the enkratic requirement, Enkratic Coordination satisfies the three desiderata our discussion has highlighted. To see this, note first that by coordinating your normative belief and your intention you will become enkratic. After all, if you take a set of considerations to favor a certain action and you base both your normative belief and your intention on those considerations, then you will intend to do what you believe you should. And by contraposition, if you are akratic then you have not based your normative belief and intention on the same set of considerations, and so they are not coordinated. And since they are not coordinated, you have not consistently treated those considerations as reasons. According to Enkratic Coordination, then, akrasia is always irrational because being akratic entails that you are in this way inconsistent.

We are now in a position to see how Enkratic Coordination explains why certain enkratic agents like Ryan are irrational in the same way that akratic agents are, and so satisfies the first desideratum. When you treat your reasons inconsistently, you form your normative belief in response to one set of considerations and your intention in response to another. It would be a bit surprising if both sets of considerations recommend the same action, and so in all likelihood you will believe that you should do one thing yet intend to do another; in short, you will likely be akratic. But surprising things do sometimes happen, as Ryan's case illustrates. His belief that he should begin a diet and exercise regimen is formed in response to considerations concerning his health; his intention to do so, however, is formed in response to considerations concerning his boss. His normative belief and his intention are therefore uncoordinated. By sheer coincidence, however, both sets of considerations favor beginning a diet and exercise regimen, and as a result he is enkratic. Yet because his enkreteia is merely the result of a happy accident, he has not become enkratic in the right way; on the contrary, Enkratic Coordination implies that he exhibits the same inconsistency that akratic agents do.

We are also in a position to see that Enkratic Coordination entails that akrasia is always irrational without entailing that akratic intentions are always irrational, and that it therefore satisfies the second desideratum. Because your normative belief and your intention are not coordinated when you are akratic, Enkratic Coordination entails that akrasia is always irrational. But notice that it only entails that your inconsistent treatment of certain considerations as reasons is irrational; it does not entail that either your normative belief or your intention is irrational. Moreover, it is possible for either your normative belief or your intention to respond rationally to reasons even when they are not coordinated.¹² For example, Sara and Alex have both failed to coordinate their normative beliefs and their intentions. But while Sara's normative belief has responded rationally to reasons and her intention has not, Alex's intention has responded rationally to reasons and his normative belief has not. Enkratic Coordination implies that both are irrational insofar as both have failed to coordinate their normative beliefs and their intentions, yet it allows that Alex's intention is just as rational as Sara's belief. In general, then, it holds that all cases of akrasia exhibit the same underlying sort of irrationality even though the intentions of inversely akratic agents like Alex are rational.

Finally, Enkratic Coordination construes the enkratic requirement as local rather than global, and so satisfies the third desideratum. The ideal way to coordinate your normative beliefs and intentions may be to respond rationally to reasons, and in that case they will be rational all things considered. But of course this is not the only way to coordinate them. For example, suppose that Ann's situation is much like Alex's: although she is currently in nursing school, her talents and interests give her conclusive reason to pursue a different career. Were she to respond rationally to these reasons, then, she would become enkratic by forming both the belief that she should quit nursing school and the intention to do so. But suppose that she does not become enkratic this way; instead, in response to the thought that nursing is a respectable career and that she should in

any case finish what she starts, she both believes she should remain in nursing school and intends to do so. Since her normative belief and her intention respond to the same considerations, they are coordinated; she may not respond rationally to her reasons, but she nevertheless treats them consistently. Agents like Ann satisfy Enkratic Coordination even though they are not rational all things considered, and so it is a local rather than global requirement.

It is tempting to suppose that because the enkratic requirement is local, the correct formulation of it will refer only to normative beliefs and corresponding intentions. But if we succumb to this temptation yet give up the idea that facts about what one should do are themselves practical reasons, it will be difficult to explain why akrasia is irrational. We are better off resisting the temptation and formulating the enkratic requirement so that it refers not only to normative beliefs and intentions but to the considerations on which they are based as well. We can then locate akratic agents' irrationality in the way they treat these considerations as reasons rather than in their normative beliefs and intentions.¹³ Thus, while the enkratic requirement is not global, it is not so local as to involve only your normative belief and your intention.

It is plausible that rationality demands that you coordinate your normative beliefs and your intentions, and it is plausible that this demand is the enkratic requirement. We may therefore conclude that Enkratic Coordination is an at least roughly correct formulation of this requirement. A few modifications, however, may be in order. For example, we could modify the notion of coordination so that it demands not only that you base your normative beliefs and intentions on the same considerations, but that you assign these considerations proportionate weights. For example, we could say that your normative belief that you should do A and your intention to do A are coordinated only if it is the case that, for any consideration R, you assign R a strong weight in your deliberation about whether to believe that you should do A if and only if it strongly motivates you to do (and hence to intend to do) A. We could also allow that coordination comes

in degrees. For example, we could say that the greater the overlap between the considerations on which your normative belief are based and those on which your intention are based, and the greater the extent to which these considerations are given approximately proportionate weights, the higher the degree to which they are coordinated. It may then be plausible to say that the enkratic requirement demands only that your normative belief and intention be highly, and not necessarily perfectly, coordinated.

4 Conclusion

However, we need not detain ourselves by determining which modifications to Enkratic Coordination, if any, are needed. It is enough to have determined the general approach we should take when formulating the enkratic requirement. According to this approach, rationality demands a certain sort of consistency that enkreteia usually exhibits and that akrasia never exhibits. But this consistency does not directly concern pairs consisting of a normative belief and an intention; rather, it concerns the considerations on which those beliefs and intentions are based. This allows it to satisfy the three desiderata identified above: it specifies a local requirement that not only explains why enkratic agents like Ryan are irrational in the same way that akratic agents are, but also counts the intentions of inversely akratic agents like Alex as rational.¹⁴

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¹ Arpaly (2000) argues that in certain cases it is more rational for you to perform an akratic action than an enkratic one, given your belief about what you should do. But this is compatible with saying that you would be still more rational were you to become enkratic by revising your belief about what you should do. Arpaly-style cases, then, do not undermine the claim that rationality demands that you be enkratic. I discuss such cases in §2 below.

² My own view is that we may distinguish enkreteia and akrasia on the one hand from strength and weakness of will on the other. Holton and Dodd are concerned with the latter while I am here concerned with the former.

⁴ This example is borrowed from Kavka (1983).

⁵ Broome (2001) suggests a view along these lines.

⁶ Davidson (1980: 41) and Smith (1994: 177-80) suggest such a view.

⁷ Another way of defending Normative Guidance is by saying that your belief that you should do an action is itself a (conclusive) reason to do it; in that case Alex has a conclusive reason to stay in nursing school after all. However, it is implausible to suppose that your belief that you should do an action is itself a reason to do it. As Kolodny (2005) and Broome (1999) argue, this supposition leads to illegitimate bootstrapping.

⁸ For a related objection to this account of practical reasoning, see Holton (2006); for a rather different objection, see Heironymi (2009).

⁹ Arpaly's (2000) example of Sam is similar to the example of Alex, and she draws a similar conclusion.

¹⁰ Kolodny (2005) relies on this point in constructing an error theory of rational requirements. However, he identifies a variation of what I am calling Normative Guidance as a rational requirement. I agree that Normative Guidance is erroneous, but because I do not think it is a rational requirement, I am not advancing an error theory.

¹¹ Kearns and Star (2009) offer several arguments for a version of this idea, but they do not consider how it might help our understanding of enkreteia.

¹² Of course, it is not possible for both your normative belief and your intention to respond rationally to reasons when you are akratic, as our discussion of Shared Reasons – and in particular our discussion of its application to Sara and Alex – makes clear.

¹³ Similarly, it is difficult to explain the sense in which it is inconsistent to assert that p and assert that you do not believe that p . But perhaps the inconsistency can be explained in terms of the relationship between the reasons for each of these assertions. For an approach along these lines, see Millgram (1994).

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