Interpersonal Hope and Loving Attention

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[Penultimate Draft – forthcoming in *The Philosophical Quarterly*]

Abstract: Imagine that your lover or close friend has embraced a difficult long-term goal, such as advancing environmental justice, breaking a bad habit, or striving to become a better person. Which stance should you adopt toward their prospects for success? Does supporting our significant others in the pursuit of valuable goals require ignoring part of our evidence? I argue that we have special reasons – reasons grounded in friendship – to hope that our loved ones succeed in their difficult goals. I further propose that hope is an attitude governed by distinctive norms of epistemic rationality. It has a unique impact on motivation and rational action and a special capacity to be met with uptake in hope. Owing to these features, hope is the central attitudinal dimension of truly amiable support based on "just vision".

Keywords: hope; love; friendship; ethics of belief; attention; difficult action

I. Introduction[1]

Pursuing difficult long-term projects and goals can be psychologically taxing. Those who embark on a difficult long-term goal, such as contributing to a social or political cause, overcoming a bad habit, or becoming a better person in some way, often face setbacks. They might also encounter evidence that what they desire will not be forthcoming, or doubt whether their efforts will really make a difference. To avoid losing heart, agents engaged in difficult long-term pursuits often rely on mentors, allies, and significant others. These others can offer a certain perspective on the future, one that the agent might not be able to adopt if left entirely to her own devices.

[1] I am grateful to participants and audiences at the Montreal Affective Lab, Georgia State University (online), the 2023 Eastern APA, the 2023 CPA, the 2024 Central APA, the 2024 meeting of the Florida Philosophical Association, and Simon Fraser University (online). Special thanks to Sergio Tenenbaum, Miriam Schleifer McCormick, Laura Silva, Juan S. Piñeros Glasscock, Eugene Chislenko, Katie Stockdale, Mauro Rossi, Cathy Mason, Alexandra Lloyd, and Richard Manning.

Thus, our lovers, friends, and allies are not only able to act supportively: they can also adopt a distinctive perspective; one rooted in relationships of friendship and love, regarding whether we will succeed in achieving what we desire. This difference in perspective, in turn, seems able to positively transform our own way of looking at the future. To illustrate, consider the following case:

> *Environmental Activism*: Keiko and Zuri are long-time friends. They have recently begun to engage in environmental activism. United by a shared commitment to environmental justice, they co-organize artistic events in their community. After discussions with some people from outside their circle who question the efficacy of their practices, Zuri's motivation begins to wane. She would be ready to give up if it were not for Keiko, who continues sharing and reiterating her vision of what they can achieve together. Zuri needs Keiko's way of looking at the future to keep going.

Can Keiko adopt a perspective on the future that will rejuvenate Zuri's motivation to go on without disregarding the evidence – evidence that their practices might not be effective, that their contributions might be pointless, that realizing what they desire might be impossible? Or does supporting others in pursuing unlikely outcomes – such as contributing to the realization of justice – always require a degree of epistemic irrationality? When it comes to mental states and attitudes, what does support for significant others who are pursuing difficult goals entail?

Up until now, the debate around if and how the demands of friendship extend to the mental realm has almost exclusively focused on exemplary friends' doxastic attitudes and evidence-gathering practices in cases where friends are accused of wrongdoing. Some

philosophers have used such cases to argue that friendship can constitutively require epistemic irrationality (Baker 1987; Keller 2004; Stroud 2006). Others have tried to vindicate a compatibility between the demands of friendship and epistemic norms (e.g. Kawall 2013; Goldberg 2019). Although touching on some important aspects of love and friendship, these discussions overlook some central dimensions of interpersonal relationships – dimensions that are exemplified in cases like *Environmental Activism*. Because support in difficult pursuits partly explains why we see friendship as a good, we need to better understand how we should relate to significant others who are aspiring to achieve difficult goals (Section II). I contend that doing this requires venturing beyond current doxastic accounts of friendship demands in the mental realm. We should, instead, consider the possibility that support might involve an emotional stance – a stance of *hope* (Section III).[2] I further propose that acknowledging hope's centrality in close relationships can dispel concerns about the compatibility between friendship and epistemic norms.

We will see that hope is a key attitudinal aspect of close interpersonal relationships. This is because it can do a lot for both lover and beloved while constituting a form of "just attention", which aims to see loved ones clearly for their own sake (Murdoch 1970/2014). We have special, defeasible normative reasons to hope for the realization of our beloveds' difficult goals. This is thanks to (a) hope's power to promote the demanding acts of support we associate with close interpersonal relationships and (b) its power to instil hope in others, and thus augment our beloveds' capacity for perseverance (Section IV). Importantly, our reasons to hope in contexts of close relationships are not exhausted by the "practical"

[2] Hope has thus far been almost completely absent from debates around epistemic partiality. Jason Kawall (2013: 357–58) has suggested that we owe our friends attitudes other than belief, including hope. However, he does not develop this suggestion further nor attempt to tie it to debates surrounding the nature of hope.

advantages of hoping (i.e. by the positive motivational effects hope can have on lover and beloved). More specifically, I will argue that, in cases of difficult action, the hope of friends is typically an epistemically rational emotion (Section V). It is a way of accurately representing the world, one that is responsive to other evidence-sensitive states. Because hope can be epistemically rational for friends when it is not for strangers, I propose that it constitutes a prime manifestation of love's partial, but just, vision.

II. Difficult Goals, Support, and the Mental Demands of Friendship

To appreciate the profound effects our friends' stances on our future have when we pursue difficult long-term goals, consider some other cases that share important similarities with *Environmental Activism*. In the kind of case I have in mind, we learn that our lover, close friend, or significant other has embarked on a difficult long-term pursuit. We know that they see this goal as contributing significant value or meaning to their life.[3] We can further assume that, despite the low odds and challenges, our friend's or lover's initial decision to embrace their difficult end is practically rational. Their desire to realize the goal is strong enough (or the utility they assign to success high enough) that their decision to pursue the difficult project makes sense.[4]

I will focus on cases with these features because they most effectively support the intuition that a beloved's commitment to a difficult goal, much like one's own, generates both normative pressures to behave in certain ways and pressures to think differently from

[3] We can safely set aside issues about the normative or ethical impact of promising because the friend has not invited us to rely on her success by promising us that she will succeed (see Marušić 2015, Chapter 7).

[4] For reasons discussed below, these assumptions align with the few discussions of partiality and difficult action found in the contemporary literature (see, e.g., Morton and Paul 2019: 181–83).

a detached observer (see Marušić 2015; Paul and Morton 2018). Thus, consider the following case with the features just mentioned:

> *Berlin Alexanderplatz*:[5] Franz has resolved to "let go of his old ways". He wants to leave his previous life of crime and quit drinking and gambling. His initial attempts fail. Quitting old habits requires resolve, and there are always temptations nearby. After a period of relapse, Franz is left discouraged and ashamed of himself. Reaching out to him in his shame, his partner Lina tells him, "I believe in you, Franz. And I believe in *us*". Moved by Lina's expression of love, Franz manages (at least for a while) to remain motivated to reform his character "whatever that will turn out to involve".

In both *Environmental Activism* and *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, it appears that agents who are committed to difficult long-term goals "outsource" the task of adopting attitudes conducive to perseverance to friends and lovers. Keiko and Lina help their loved ones to achieve their goals, not only by providing time and resources but also by seeing the future in a specific way and sharing their perspective. After listening to Lina's profession of love, Franz stops viewing perseverance in improving his character as futile. Instead, he comes to see it as the reasonable thing to do (despite his still imperfect vision of who he might become). My aim is to account for the "internal" perspective of support – or the kind of mental state or attitude – exemplary friends and lovers must be in to (externally) stand up for their loved ones and transform their perspective on the future. Put differently, I want to account for

[5] This case is inspired by the classic novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (Döblin 1929/2018).

the special perspective that exemplary friends and lovers often have good reasons to adopt toward a loved one's future and prospects of realizing some important goal.

Let us begin from the idea that friends have special, defeasible friendship-generated reasons to act in supportive ways toward friends engaged in difficult pursuits. Let us say that Chandler drives his friend Joey to Las Vegas for an audition, but would never do this if Joey were only an acquaintance (Keller 2004: 329–30). Or, imagine that you only attend a poetry reading at a local café because your friend will be presenting (despite knowing that the poetry there is usually pretty bad) (Keller 2004: 331–33). Because reasons of partiality appear grounded in the value of individuals – specifically, in the value of their welfare, their capacity for flourishing, and their capacity to form autonomous preferences (Keller 2013: 101–03), we should accept that our reasons to support friends in their projects only obtain when such projects are tied to those values.[6] In addition, we should acknowledge that our reasons to support friends in their difficult goals can be justified by their value as individuals without our having as strong reasons to promote anybody's goals (considering that all individuals have value). More precisely, our specific relationships can act as "enablers" (Jollimore 2011; Keller 2013) or "intensifiers" (Lord 2016; Löschke 2017) for reasons grounded in individuals' value. So, many people might benefit from your attendance and encouragement at the local café, but the fact that your friend is reading increases the weight of reasons you have to attend and support her (given considerations that her poetry project positively contributes to her welfare, flourishing, and/or autonomy).

[6] Since morally impermissible goals can be thought to undermine our friends' best interests (properly conceived), to be an obstacle to their flourishing, and even to undermine their autonomy (Ebels-Duggan 2008), we do not seem to possess special reasons of friendship to further our friends' morally impermissible ends. I come back to this issue in Section V, where I discuss the authority we usually grant our beloveds in choosing worthwhile ends.

We can, in fact, appeal to the existence of unique "relationship goods" to provide a deeper explanation for why friendship and other close relationships can increase the weight of our reasons to help friends – reasons that are grounded in those friends' value as individuals (Keller 2006; Keller 2013, Chapter 5). If truly amiable support (or "friendship support") is unique, contributes to our lives in distinctive ways, and cannot be found outside close relationships, then we gain an explanation for why we have especially strong reasons to stand by friends pursuing difficult goals. If we think (as I will argue) that hope is a central mental attitude underlying such unique friendship support, then we get friendship-generated special reasons to have hope.[7]

The first step to appreciating hope's hitherto underacknowledged importance in close interpersonal relationships involves determining how truly amiable support in difficult action contexts is unique.[8] I submit that friendship support is unique in that it is especially resilient or "robust". Demands to help promote a beloved's difficult ends are not as easily overridden by considerations of costs to oneself as demands to help strangers are. We will see this in more detail shortly when focusing on *Berlin Alexanderplatz*. The key claim here is that, if we are supportive, we should be ready to bear comparatively greater risks and costs to further our friends' valuable ends than those of strangers (Lange 2022: sec. 4.2). This robustness also comes with an expectation of reciprocity. We know that our

[7] These reasons are practical in nature. They have to do with hope's capacity to help us realize the distinctive good just mentioned (Section IV). Yet, in the class of cases that interest me, hope is usually epistemically rational in a way that also depends on friendship (Section V). Because hope is warranted from a variety of perspectives in our cases (all of which are impacted by friendship), we have friendship-generated, special reasons to hope.

[8] I agree with much of what Simon Keller (2013) says about partiality being justified by the value of individuals. Yet, as will become clear, we part ways in our understanding of friendship's "relationship goods". I maintain that friendship support requires "just vision" while he does not (Keller 2004: 339–40).

beloveds would act the same way in return; they would also be willing to perform costly actions with uncertain payoffs to promote our difficult ends.

I also submit that friendship support is distinctly valuable owing to its power to transform one's stance toward the future. As noted when introducing *Environmental Activism* and *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, having friends stand by you seems able to change which possibilities you take seriously and how you relate to future events in ways that interacting with strangers cannot. This feature of truly amiable support needs explanation, and I propose that we can account for it by appealing to hope.[9]

Finally note that friendship support is unique in that it seems to be grounded in a kind of "just vision" of our loved ones (Murdoch 1970/2014; Wolf 2014). Such a vision aims to see them clearly – for their own sake. Loving another person involves directing one's attention toward a specific concrete individual. This is, arguably, different from primarily attending to their personhood, their humanity, or a shared history (Yao 2020). A love based on these latter features (which are unconnected to a beloved's character and individual uniqueness) is intelligible and often valuable. But it seems to fall short of what our loved ones need in times of struggle (Yao 2020: sec. IV). Take, for instance, a love expressed in the belief that "there is some good in a person" or "that they will somehow improve". It appears that such a stance can too easily exacerbate feelings of shame and estrangement between friends – feelings that often characterize cases like *Berlin Alexanderplatz*.

[9] In a sense, Victoria McGeer (2008) makes this point when she highlights the benefits of hope in "scaffolding agency". But, as we will see in Section IV, her account of hope's effects on others differs from mine.

Evidentially disconnected beliefs with content that is more focused on the individual and her pursuit seem to fare no better in our cases. The belief that your friend *will* succeed in attaining her difficult goal when the evidence supports a less sanguine outlook can put her at risk; it can lead her to waste resources and incur opportunity costs (Paul and Morton 2018: sec. V). It also appears to constitute a failure to appreciate her for who she is (considering all her qualities but also her shortcomings). It seems possible to offer a kind of support that is both robust and may come at great cost to ourselves, while still being clear-eyed about one's friend's specific difficulties and challenges. I am proposing that we can do this by adopting the attitude of hope.

III. Hope as Friendship Support's Attitudinal Dimension

We need an account of the "internal", mental, or "attitudinal" dimension of friendship support, one that makes sense of this distinctive relationship good's features. On my account, hoping that a friend succeeds in their difficult goal can (a) be a way of seeing them clearly for their own sake, (b) rationalize the acts of unwavering support we associate with friendship, and (c) transform a beloved's perspective on the future. After getting clearer on the nature of hope, I will look at its motivational effects on lover and beloved and explore our practical reasons to have hope (Section IV). I then return to pertinent issues surrounding epistemic rationality and just vision (Section V).

III.1. Introducing the Attentional View

Hope has often been defined as a combination of the belief that an outcome is possible (but not certain) with a desire for that outcome (see, e.g., Hobbes 1651/1994).[10] This "standard account" might make sense of the insignificant or "banal" hopes of everyday life (such as the hope that one's grocer will not run out of one's favourite vegetable tomorrow). Yet it seems to struggle to capture the nature and apparently distinctive motivational influence of hope experienced in "times of trial" or challenging circumstances, which some have called "substantial hope" (e.g. Martin 2013).

When realizing that a hoped-for outcome partly turns on our own efforts, hope seems able to "buoy us against setbacks and low odds of success" (Calhoun 2018: 69). It can help us "positively and expansively inhabit our agency" (McGeer 2004: 104) by motivating us to take means to our ends. Pinning down exactly what hope's distinctive motivational influence consists in is difficult, but as before, some examples will be helpful. Consider Gabriel Segal and Mark Textor's (2015: 209–10) *Mountaineers* case. Reinhold and Hillary are mountaineers climbing a difficult route. They both believe that they have a fifty percent chance of success and, by hypothesis, have equally strong desires to reach the summit. But because Reinhold hopes that he will make it, he is likely to keep pushing himself to the top, whereas Hillary – who has lost all hope of summitting – is likely to return. This case (like several similar ones[11]) supports the view that hope can play a role that goes beyond desire in preventing thoughts of wasted effort from gripping us. Hope can help agents identify and then move along suitable paths to their goals, which often renders

[10] Arguably, in both earlier and contemporary accounts, the sense of possibility at play in hope is not understood as "nomological" or "physical/causal" but rather "metaphysical". Among other things, this allows for hope about an afterlife (as depicted in many religious traditions). See Chignell (2013) for further discussion.

[11] See Rioux (2021) for a detailed list of recent cases with a similar structure.

the realization of what they desire more probable. Those who hope typically view vividly imagining a desired outcome and planning for it to be "hope-activities" worth engaging in (Martin 2013, Chapter 2). As such, they are – other things being equal – often more likely to persevere in making it happen.

Various accounts of hope have recently been developed to do justice to substantial hope's motivational influence. One theory of hope – what has been called the Attentional View (Rioux 2022; Chignell 2023) – seems especially well-suited to my purposes.[12] On the Attentional View, to genuinely hope for something (*p*) in the substantial sense, one must do more than just desire that *p* and believe that *p* is possible (but not certain). One must also be disposed to attend to *p* under the aspect of its "unswamped possibility" (Chignell 2023) or (equivalently for current purposes) under the aspect of its "possibility and goodness" (Rioux 2022). In other words, the Attentional View holds that hope involves attention "under an aspect" – a disposition to focus on a desired outcome as one "whose possibility is more salient than countervailing considerations". These considerations include an outcome's "perceived improbability, riskiness, harmfulness, precarity, or impermissibility" (Chignell 2023: 55). In short, this means that one hopes for an outcome as long as its possibility tends to be more psychologically salient than the idea that it should not happen, is very unlikely to happen, or involves a very low probability of realization (or a very high a risk of the opposite).

On the Attentional View, we can thus say that Keiko hopes (in the substantial sense) that Zuri will succeed in making a difference to the realization of environmental justice if

[12] The arguments in the following sections could possibly be made using other theories of hope (see Rioux 2021 for an overview). Nonetheless, the Attentional View provides an especially unified and compelling account of the cases I am discussing.

she is disposed to attend to Zuri's success in this difficult project under the aspect of its "unswamped possibility" (or [equivalently for current purposes] its "possibility and goodness").[13] If Keiko's attention is, instead, monopolized by countervailing considerations (such as Zuri's low chance of achieving her goal), then we cannot say that she hopes Zuri will succeed. Keiko hopes that Zuri will manage to make a difference if – in her usual set of circumstances and were she focused on that outcome – she would attend to it under the aspect just mentioned. We can therefore imagine Keiko neither believing that Zuri's odds of success are higher than they actually are nor being deceived about her challenge, but, instead, simply directing her attention in a distinctive and hopeful way.

III.2. Hope as an Emotion

Hope figures in many influential taxonomies of the emotions (see, e.g., de Sousa 1987: 109–14; Tappolet 2016: 25–6). The Attentional View has the advantage of being congenial to these classifications. As we will see, by according with our best theories on the nature of emotions, the Attentional View can capture how hope often constitutes a way to both represent the world as it is and properly respond to other evidence-sensitive evaluative processes and states. This is an important advantage given my goal of grasping the connection between hope and "just vision".

Ronald de Sousa (1987) was among the first to emphasize emotions' distinctive role in controlling attentional salience. He argues that emotions allow us to solve the "philosopher's frame problem" (i.e. determining how to allocate our limited cognitive and

[13] One can interpret Rioux's (2022) view as placing stronger requirements for the presence of hope than Chignell's (2023) does. We can imagine someone being disposed to comparatively attend more to an outcome's possibility than to countervailing considerations without thereby being disposed to attend to it as good. This difference does not matter for my purposes given that we may think that the cases I am discussing will often involve attention to goodness.

agential resources to aspects of our environment that matter vis-à-vis our aims and concerns). On de Sousa's influential account, emotions' epistemic significance primarily consists in their capacity to capture and maintain attention on "the emotional object" in circumstances where we would otherwise face a plethora of practical and cognitive options. Distinct emotions are constituted by distinct attentional patterns and usually prompt a search for information bearing on the adequacy of our concerns. Fear and anxiety, for instance, are constituted by a focus on an undesired event under the aspect of its actuality (in the case of fear) or under the aspect of its possibility (in the case of anxiety). Fear and anxiety also lead to downstream attention and information processing about suitable fight and escape strategies (see Brady 2013).

On the Attentional View, the function of the emotions (including hope) in controlling salience is connected to the idea that emotions are representations of the world and its evaluative features. Emotions are endowed with intentionality and, as ordinary language suggests, they can help us learn about value (Deonna and Teroni 2012; Tappolet 2016). Each emotion type typically corresponds to an evaluative predicate ("shameful", "disgusting", "annoying", "contemptible", "admirable", "amusing", and so on). An attentional approach to emotions generally urges us to distinguish this intentionality from that of belief and belief-desire pairs. If emotions constrain which epistemic options (i.e. beliefs) and which practical options (i.e. actions) are available to us by controlling attentional salience, then they should not be identified with beliefs or pairs of cognitive-conative states (de Sousa 1987, Chapter 7).[14] Instead, emotions – as *sui generis* mental

[14] There are other compelling arguments against reductionist approaches to the emotions, specifically arguments that focus on emotions' apparent inability to account for "emotional recalcitrance" (wherein agents experience emotions whose contents are in tension with their beliefs) (D'Arms and Jacobson 2003). Hope

states controlling attention and the allocation of our limited cognitive and practical resources – have their own intentionality.[15]

Taking emotions' distinctiveness as attitudes seriously entails viewing their epistemic rationality as having two dimensions:

1. We can focus on the epistemic justification of an emotion, which concerns its relations with the evidence and other evidence-sensitive states. More precisely, an emotion is epistemically justified if and only if the mental states that provide it with its particular object (what it is about) and thus constitute its "cognitive base" are also epistemically justified (i.e. supported by the evidence) (Deonna and Teroni 2012, Chapter 1). Fear of a dog can, thus, count as epistemically justified if and only if the beliefs that provide this emotion with its particular object are also epistemically justified (e.g. if and only if the belief that there is a dog in front of you baring its teeth and preparing to pounce is supported by the evidence).
2. We can also consider an emotion's "fittingness" or "evaluative correctness". According to a long and influential tradition, an emotion's "formal object" designates the evaluative property its various instances commonly attribute to their particular objects as tokens of a specific emotion type (Kenny 1963; de

might still entail a desire even if it is not reducible to a belief-desire pair. More specifically, we might need to appeal to desire in explaining some of hope's motivational and rationalizing effects (see Section IV below).

[15] Emotions can be thought of as quasi-perceptions of the kinds of evaluative features just mentioned (Tappolet 2016) or felt attitudes of action-readiness (also counting as evaluative representations) (Deonna and Teroni 2015). As Santiago Echeverri (2019) notes, both these views can be plausibly interpreted as forms of "representationalism" about the emotions (where emotions attribute evaluative properties to their intentional objects). Both views can also partly characterize and individuate emotions by appealing to their attentional effects.

Sousa 1987). A token emotion is said to be "fitting" or "correct" if and only if its intentional or particular object exemplifies the "formal object" associated with its kind as an emotion (Teroni 2007; Echeverri 2019). In this case, the dog must actually have the normative property of "dangerousness" (or "fearsomeness") for your fear to be fitting. Whether the dog actually possesses this normative property depends on facts about the dog (e.g. barred teeth and preparedness to pounce) but also facts about yourself (e.g. a dog that's dangerous to a "regular" person might not be dangerous to a dog trainer). One can have misleading evidence about any of these facts, and thus experience epistemically justified, but unfitting, fear. Or, one can have good, but insufficient, evidence of the dog's features and/or one's situation, in which case one's fear would be epistemically unjustified but fitting (Echeverri 2019: sec. 2).

Applying these norms of epistemic rationality to hope – specifically to *Berlin Alexanderplatz* – we can, then, claim as follows: For Lina's hope that Franz will let go of his old ways to be epistemically rational, her beliefs about that outcome (especially those that bear on its "formal object") must be epistemically justified. Lina must have sufficient evidence to believe that Franz's transformation is possible (but not certain) and that it will constitute a positive turn of events in his life. Yet, for Lina's hope to be fully epistemically rational, her hope must also correctly represent the "formal object" of (or evaluative property specific to) hope qua emotion kind.

We cannot rely on ordinary language to shed light on hope's formal object. This is because hope (unlike admiration and the "admirable") is not associated with an evaluative

predicate normally used in ordinary language. Still, we can aim to "reverse engineer" hope's formal object by turning directly to intuitions regarding when it is fitting. Following Michael Milona and Katie Stockdale (2018) (who take inspiration from d'Arms and Jacobson 2000), we can evaluate hope as fitting "in terms of size" when its intensity as an emotion corresponds to the degree to which hope's evaluative property or "formal object" is instantiated. We can, then, home in on the following plausible intuitions: (a) intense hope for an outcome that is highly unlikely is often (but not always) unfitting and (b) hope for an outcome that is equally valuable and probable for two agents can be fitting for one but not the other, depending on features of their respective practical situations (Milona and Stockdale 2018: sec. 5). A good account of what "hopeworthiness" is should do justice to these intuitions.

To stimulate and refine such intuitions, let us return to *Mountaineers*. This time, imagine that, considering the low odds, Hilary (but not Reinhold) might benefit more from concentrating his efforts on other goals aside from summitting. In this version of the example, although (by hypothesis) both mountaineers equally desire to summit, Hilary has other desires that Reinhold does not share. These desires have a greater likelihood of being fulfilled if Hilary pursues them than the likelihood of his reaching the summit if he focuses solely on that goal. (For example, Hilary might be drawn to pursuits like conservation work or studying the mountain's ecosystem – desires that offer tangible rewards even if the summit remains out of reach.) I submit that, in such a case (and considering the low odds), summitting might be hopeworthy for Reinhold but not for Hilary, even if we assume that this outcome is equally strongly desired and deemed equally probable by each agent. Or,

we could say that summitting is *more* hopeworthy for Reinhold than for Hilary, such that a more intense hope is fitting for the former but not the latter.

To account for hopeworthiness' sensitivity to probability and reasons to pursue alternative and more probable ends, we should follow Milona and Stockdale (2018) in accepting the following claim: Hopeworthiness is the property an outcome possesses when its pursuit is supported by the balance of the hoper's possessed reasons for action.[16] Because hopeworthy outcomes are worth pursuing in our practical deliberation (or in light of our practical reasons), neither impossible nor certain outcomes can be hopeworthy. Practical deliberation concerns outcomes we can influence, and we cannot influence what is impossible or make a significant difference to what will certainly occur.[17] Most importantly, on my account of hopeworthiness, for any highly unlikely outcome to be hopeworthy, it must have great value for the relevant agent or accord with the rest of her possessed reasons for action.[18] Depending on practical reasons for pursuing alternative

[16] Milona and Stockdale (2018) call this property "encouragingness" to indicate its sensitivity to probability. I prefer to use "hopeworthiness", which is analogous to other emotion terms (such as blameworthiness). Milona and Stockdale also develop a "perceptual" approach to hope, one that I think falls under the broad umbrella of the Attentional View.

[17] Compare this with Bobier (2017). Christopher A. Bobier claims that "hope is necessary for practical deliberation", where one hopes that *p* whenever one engages in practical reasoning about how to obtain *p*. Bobier assumes the "standard account" of hope (which I reject) and argues that practical reasoning is limited to what an agent believes she can attain, what she desires, and what is an open future possibility. On my view of hope, there are numerous cases where Bobier's descriptive claim fails since one can engage in practical reasoning about how to obtain *p* without hoping for *p* in the substantial sense I am after. Still, my conception of hopeworthiness commits me to a tight connection between being practically rational in pursuing an end *p* and being epistemically rational in having hope that *p*. This is because an outcome *p* is hopeworthy whenever it is supported by the balance of an agent's reasons to promote *p*. If one rationally pursues an end *p*, then it is also fitting for one to hope that *p*.

[18] There are many ways of "pursuing *p*" or "promoting *p*" without enjoying direct control over *p*. My proposal is, therefore, compatible with the idea that an outcome over which we have only a limited and indirect influence can count as hopeworthy. See Milona and Stockdale 2018, note 14. One may also see oneself as having conclusive reasons to pursue an outcome (and thus apprehend it as "hopeworthy") while recognizing that those reasons are defeated by a lack of control (e.g., a hope oriented toward the past). In that case, one's hope becomes a recalcitrant emotion (see note 13).

courses of action, an outcome can have the same "objective" value for two agents (and, as such, be equally desired by both), and yet be hopeworthy for one and not the other.

In Section V, I will tease out some implications of this conception of hopeworthiness and hope's epistemic rationality for our friendship cases. But to appreciate these implications, we must first explore hope's impact on motivation, action, and a beloved's future-directed attitudes (i.e. our practical reasons for having hope). As we will see, our practical reasons to have hope ultimately inform hope's epistemic rationality.

IV. Friendship-Generated Practical Reasons to Have Hope

Starting with its capacity to help us offer resilient support, we should acknowledge hope's role in promoting practically rational risk-taking. Some have argued that, owing to hope's "third dimension" (beyond belief and desire), those who hope can acknowledge previously underappreciated aspects of their desired outcome's goodness. By augmenting the utility they attribute to that outcome's realization, hopers can then become rational in taking costly steps with uncertain payoffs (or "risks") to making their hoped-for outcome happen (Martin 2013: 25–9; Humbert-Droz and Vazard forthcoming). In a similar vein, Luc Bovens (1999: 670–71) has invoked various cases to argue that hope prevents us from overly focusing on possible losses in "more than fair" gambles (i.e. gambles with a positive expected utility). Hope can, thereby, promote practically rational decision-making.

Like Catherine Rioux (2022), I think that the Attentional View of hope can account for the connection between hope and risk-taking. The Attentional View is compatible with the notion of hope reinforcing our desires and making us learn about previously underacknowledged features of our hoped-for outcomes. As we saw, the Attentional View suggests that hope – as an emotion focusing attention on its intentional object – can lead to

a search for information bearing on its own adequacy (with ensuing effects on motivation and rational action). The Attentional View can also capture Bovens' insight that hope's positive influence on rational action is a matter of focus: By focusing her attention on the outcome of Franz realizing his project under the aspect of its undefeated possibility, Lina opts for courses of action that involve the *possibility* of attaining that best possible outcome (as opposed to courses of action that yield a greater probability of getting outcomes that are not as good). Many people mean Franz well and want what is good for him. Some might even have a strong desire (perhaps as strong as Lina's) for him to succeed in becoming a better person. But it does not seem that these people (even those who desire Franz's success very strongly) would always be rational to act like Lina. Following Rioux (2022), I submit that Lina turning the city upside down while looking for Franz in the middle of the night to ensure that he has not lapsed again can be seen as practically rational given her hope-related attentional dispositions.[19] Because Lina attends to Franz's success under the aspect of its "unswamped possibility", searching the city alone at night does not appear to be an unnecessary risk. Instead, it seems to be something worthwhile. Despite its uncertain effectiveness, taking such a step (at least) yields *some chance* of helping Franz. It is also a way to avoid letting him down. I propose that Lina can provide the personally costly and resilient support we associate with friends because of her hope.

We have friendship-generated normative reasons to hope for the success of our friends' difficult endeavours due to hope's motivational and rationalizing effects on both the lover and the beloved. To grasp these effects, it is important to note that hope in our

[19] Rioux (2022) relies on Lara Buchak's (2013) risk-weighted expected utility theory (REU) to explain the connection between hope for outcomes that we can influence and risk-inclination. Rioux takes hope's attentional dimension to have an impact at the level of our "risk-attitudes", which constitute the "third factor" determining rational action (alongside utilities and credences).

cases has another agent's future actions as its object. There is an important difference between such hope's "negative resolution" regarding the second-personal feeling of being "let down" and the emotionally detached disappointment we ordinarily experience when an outcome that does not involve another agent's actions fails to materialize.

Let us return to *Environmental Activism* and imagine that Keiko does not only perform risky and personally costly acts of support because of her hope that Zuri will contribute to the realization of environmental justice. She also communicates her hope to Zuri, saying things like, "I know that changing people's minds about climate change will be hard, but you can do it; it's *possible*, and it would be such a great achievement." Imagine that Zuri eventually makes an important contribution (at least partly) because of the perspective Keiko offers on her future. I submit that Keiko would then be justified in taking pride in Zuri's achievement – in seeing herself as having contributed to realizing something of value.

Now imagine that Zuri fails to exercise her will in realizing the future Keiko tries to get her to envision through her hope. After having committed to her goal, Zuri gives up despite still desiring its realization and knowing that it is possible. I contend that, in such circumstances, Keiko may feel that Zuri has somehow let *her* down (Martin 2020: sec. 1). Zuri's giving up can be interpreted as a refusal to consider the perspective on the future Keiko is trying so hard to offer. It can, in a sense, be seen as a lack of appreciation *for her*. To explain why such second-personal feelings of pride and let-down can be apt in our cases, we must view the kind of hope they involve as an emotion that is experienced from the "participant stance" (the stance we take toward agents whom we consider to be responsible for their actions) (Strawson 1963/2008). More concretely, I propose that, in

our cases, communicated hope seeks the uptake of another agent whom we take to be responsible for both bringing about what she desires and accepting or rejecting the perspective on the future we try to communicate via hope. When hope is communicated and its uptake occurs, our beloveds can reap hope's risk-taking benefits and thereby often remain rational in their resolve. This is all the more practical reason for friends to have hope.

On an influential communicative view, reactive attitudes are "incipient forms of communication" (Watson 2008). They are mental states seeking the uptake of their representational content in others (Macnamara 2015), whose present existence and centrality in our relationships depend on their communicative nature.[20] Praise, for instance, has been described as one such emotion. Due to representing someone as having performed some morally upstanding action, praise is important in our social relations because it tends to cause uptake of that representational content in others (via the attitude of pride) (Telech 2021: sec. II). In line with the Attentional View, I propose viewing hope in our cases as a communicative emotion. When communicated in the context of close interpersonal relationships, hope is an attitude that seeks a response from another agent; it seeks a match of representational content in our target in the form of hope. We can best explain hope's positive and negative resolution in our cases (in pride and "let-down", respectively) by viewing hope as having a 'call-and-response' structure (Macnamara 2015). We feel second-personal pride or let-down because we thought that our hopes related us essentially

[20] The other-regarding reactive attitudes of resentment, indignation, gratitude, and approval have all been construed as "communicative emotions" (MacNamara 2015; Mason 2017). Reactive attitudes might count as communicative even when not actually communicated. Due to their etiological function and associated action tendencies, blame-manifesting attitudes, for instance, can be communicative as a type even when unexpressed. For simplicity, I will focus on overly expressed hope.

to an agent who understood our attitude toward (and investment in) their future, and could either reject or accept it (thereby gaining hope for their success and consequently persevering).

Unlike some of the more closely studied attitudes exhibited from the participant stance, hope's representational content of seeing an outcome as hopeworthy is not expressed in what has been called a "deontic modality" (Mason 2017). In contrast to those who express their resentment, those who communicate their hopes do not issue demands. In our cases, hope's representational content concerns an agent's future acts rather than her past actions, which also stands in contrast to what holds of the classic reactive attitudes. Still, the kind of hope that friends and allies appear to be under normative pressure to possess seems to belong to the same broad category as the reactive attitudes. It is an emotion that seeks uptake and is experienced from the participant stance – the stance of holding responsible.

In the contexts that interest me, hope is perhaps closest to praise (Telech 2021). It is an invitation (and not a demand) to see some of one's future (rather than past) actions as *possibly* bringing about something valuable (or even something *highly* valuable [when the probabilities are low]). This is an invitation to take forward-looking responsibility for some valuable future course of action – an action that *may* succeed. When this invitation is accepted in hope, the beloved sees their future success as their lover sees it – as hopeworthy.[21] In apprehending an outcome as hopeworthy, the beloved is, in turn, disposed

[21] I must reserve the project of identifying the precise conditions for expressed hope's communicative success for another occasion. But it is worth mentioning that as is the case with other forms of address, there are many ways for invitations to see the achievement of one's difficult goal as hopeworthy to be infelicitous and miss their targets. The beloved might lack the necessary capacity to understand both the invitation's non-deontic modality and its content. Or, the lover might lack the "standing" or necessary authority to invite the beloved to see the future differently. It might seem easier to possess such standing when one is jointly

to focus on it under the aspect of its "unswamped possibility" and is, ultimately, led to be risk-inclined in making it materialize. Because communicated hope can constitute a form of address leading a beloved to risk-inclination and perseverance, we have yet more special friendship-generated practical reasons to have hope.

V. Friendship-Generated, Epistemic Reasons for Hope

To further investigate the connection between hope and "just vision", let us return to the conditions for hope's epistemic rationality (identified in Section III.2). Starting with fittingness, we can recall the idea that hope is fitting if and only if its particular object is "hopeworthy". We saw that hopeworthiness is the property an outcome possesses when its pursuit is supported by the balance of the agent's reasons for action (see also Milona and Stockdale 2018). We must now acknowledge that friendship impacts whether an outcome is hopeworthy for an agent, and thus whether it is fitting to hope for that outcome's occurrence. We will then see how friendship impacts hope's epistemic justification. Friends have special reasons of partiality to adopt an attitude whose epistemic rationality differs from that of belief and is positively influenced by friendship. We should, therefore, increase our confidence in the compatibility between the ideals of friendship and epistemic rationality.

According to the argument for the distinctive value of friendship support introduced earlier, we have especially strong reasons to support friends engaged in difficult and valuable pursuits. This is because the kind of support we can provide as friends is unique;

engaged in a collective goal (as Keiko and Zuri are) than when one hopes for the realization of an end that one does not personally share. Why this is the case might have something to do with the fact that the standing to invite hope – just like the standing to invite praise (Telech forthcoming) – might require an underlying commitment to some shared value/s.

it is not found outside close relationships. To appreciate how friendship influences hopeworthiness, note that supporting friends in their difficult ventures entails pursuing their success as an outcome and not only accompanying them in their attempts. We want our friends to actually achieve their goals and not only move toward them. Because strong reasons for support are, in fact, reasons for pursuing our friends' success as an outcome, their success in their challenging goals will typically be a hopeworthy object for us. Put differently, unless there are stronger practical reasons to pursue alternative courses of action that are incompatible with helping them, the pursuit of our friends' success will be supported by our practical reasons and thus become a fitting object of hope. To be sure, reasons for support are defeasible by other considerations, even if those reasons are especially strong due to making the unique relationship good of friendship support available. In particular, our reasons for support can be defeated by the moral impermissibility of our friends' goals (Ebels-Duggan 2008) or due to especially important prudential costs to ourselves (which might be construed as a form of moral impermissibility). When we do not possess practical reasons for support, our friends' success will usually not be hopeworthy because its pursuit will not be sufficiently supported by our practical reasons for action. What matters is that on the picture of hopeworthiness sketched here, our friends' success will typically be hopeworthy whenever we have undefeated reasons for support (which appears true in our central cases). [22] In what

[22] This follows from the account of hopeworthiness developed in Section III.2. I say "typically", since there are cases where we have undefeated reasons of friendship to be supportive, but where those reasons are nonetheless counterbalanced by those stemming from more important practical aims. We might think that in such situations, we would be better friends and have more fitting hopes if we could only let go of our other goals.

thus appears to be a virtuous circle, hope allows us to provide a kind of support whose importance in our lives contributes to hope's own epistemic rationality.

Moving on to hope's epistemic justification, we should reiterate that an emotion's epistemic justification depends on the justification of its cognitive bases, which provide the emotion with its particular object. More precisely, it depends on the epistemic rationality of beliefs about the properties of that object that relate to its evaluative features (Deonna and Teroni 2012, Chapter 1). In the case of hope, the relevant beliefs concern an outcome's possibility, uncertainty, and value. Indeed, it only makes sense to view an outcome as hopeworthy if we deem it possible (but uncertain) and valuable along some dimension. Here again, friendship seems to have an important impact. Friendship can rationalize the belief that some pursuit is valuable, even when it would be epistemically rational for strangers to believe otherwise. It is, in fact, plausible to think that, when relating to a beloved's difficult ends, friends should start from a "presumption of normative authority" (Ebels-Duggan 2008: 156–62) – a default presumption in favour of their beloved's capacity to select worthwhile ends. The reason for this is that love and friendship are characterized by an openness to the other and her interests (Cocking and Kennett 1998). It should take more evidence to conclude that a beloved's project cannot promote her value as an individual than to reach the same conclusion regarding non-friends. Friends should take evidence as a reason to "look again" if it shows that a beloved's goal is either trivial or inconsistent with their value as a person who possesses "best interests" and has the capacity for flourishing and autonomous decision-making. Such evidence should not automatically

count as a decisive reason to overthrow one's default posture of assuming a loved one's authority to select worthwhile ends.[23]

Friendship also impacts the other key condition on hope's epistemic justification. This condition has been construed as having an epistemically justified belief in the hoped-for outcome's possibility (see, e.g., Martin 2013). There are, however, compelling counterexamples. Consider, for instance, the case of Michelle. Michelle holds a ticket to a random and fair lottery, and, like anyone in her position, has good evidence that winning is possible (but uncertain) (Mueller 2021: sec. 2.2). Now, imagine that Michelle has just read the draw's result in the newspaper and, according to it, her ticket is not the winner. It does not seem epistemically permissible for Michelle to still hope that she has the winning ticket after reading the newspaper and thus coming to know that her ticket is not the winner.

Yet, a popular fallibilist account of knowledge states that one can know that *p* even though one's evidence does not entail that *p* and there remain error possibilities. So, even if Michelle knows that her ticket is not the winner, she can still justifiably believe that it is possible (but uncertain) that she has the winning ticket. After all, newspapers sometimes contain misprints. Michelle's hope should strike us as epistemically impermissible, even if she can still justifiably believe that her hoped-for outcome is possible (but uncertain). We should, then, conclude that having justified beliefs about possibility, uncertainty, and value is not sufficient for our hopes to be epistemically justified. We should instead turn to a

[23] In this respect, my view is compatible with a form of "epistemic partiality", understood as the claim that friendship constitutively influences our beliefs and belief-formation practices (see, e.g., Goldberg 2019). I contend that friendship can warrant choosing the most charitable interpretation in "permissive cases" (i.e. cases where the evidence affords more than one rational response) regarding the value of our friends' pursuits. This kind of epistemic partiality should be distinguished from the stronger and more controversial view that friendship can constitutively require epistemic irrationality (Keller 2004; Stroud 2006). I take this view's attractiveness to be undermined by my hope-centered account.

justification condition that aims to directly capture the connection between hope and knowledge. Specifically, we should accept that an agent's hope that *p* is epistemically justified if and only if her belief that *p* is desirable (or valuable) is justified, and she is neither in a position to know that *p* nor in a position to know that not-*p*.[24]

Thus, for the hope that friends will realize their difficult goals to be epistemically rational, one must neither be in a position to know that they will achieve their goals, nor in a position to know that they will not. I submit that, in our cases, the first condition is usually met and that friendship impacts whether we fulfil the second. Predictions about other agents are notoriously fallible. So, friends and non-friends alike will less often be in a position to know that someone will fail than in a position to (say) form true beliefs about someone's past. Still, I propose that due in part to hope's motivating role in the lover and its effects in instilling hope in the beloved, we may sometimes be deprived of knowledge about our friends' future failures that we would otherwise have had. Realizing that you have a particularly strong reason to support your loved one by having hope—and knowing that your hope can inspire them to hope as well (thus motivating them to persevere)—can sometimes prevent you from knowing that they will fail. In this way, hope can influence its own epistemic rationality, creating once again what we might consider a virtuous cycle.[25]

[24] "In a position to know" could either mean having evidence that is sufficient for knowledge or meeting whatever reliability or safety criteria externalist accounts posit. There are cases where one neither knows that *p* nor knows that not-*p* due to psychological biases preventing one from having the corresponding beliefs, and yet one still does not intuitively seem epistemically permitted to hope that *p*. For this reason, the condition is not formulated in terms of outright knowledge, which prevents it from being overly weak. See Mueller (2021: sec. 2.3) for more.

[25] Can we use my account to shed light on cases where friends are accused of wrongdoing? Yes, but we must bear in mind that, in what are perhaps the most interesting versions of these cases (see, e.g., Baker 1987),

VI. Concluding Thoughts

I have argued that friends have special friendship-generated reasons to have hope that a beloved engaged in difficult pursuits will succeed. Hope allows for the provision of especially resilient support. This support is grounded in an appreciation of our loved ones for who they are and has the potential to transform their outlook on the future. I have suggested that we have special reasons of partiality to provide this kind of support and thereby special practical reasons to have hope. But I have also argued that hope is usually an epistemically rational attitude in our cases. It can be both a way of seeing loved ones truly (considering their strengths and weaknesses) and an attitude that is sensitive to our unique evidential perspective as friends. We do not only have friendship-generated practical reasons to have hope but also friendship-generated epistemic reasons for hope. As such, hope is usually *the* attitude friends and lovers should adopt.[26] Relating to loved ones as we should is not only a matter of action, but one of (mental) attitude. Often, there can be no genuine support without hope.

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one seems to be in a position to know that friends have acted wrongly. It is then epistemically irrational to hope that they are innocent. We may think that if one is in such an epistemic predicament, reasons to offer friendship support grounded in just vision are defeated. The possibility of genuine and valuable friendship support might thus vanish alongside epistemically rational hope.

[26] For lack of space, I could not discuss all possible attitudes one can adopt toward a beloved's future. Instead of producing an inductive argument against other views, I have pursued a different argumentative strategy, one that stresses the benefits of turning directly to hope. I consider my view to be preferable to the one found in Morton and Paul (2018). I maintain that we should not rest content with believing in the sincerity of our beloveds' commitments when we can instead adopt an epistemically rational attitude, one that can rationalize our acts of support and transform the beloved's attitude toward the future.

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