

# **Our Attitude Towards the Motivation of Those We Trust**

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## **1. Introduction**

What is it that we trust in other people?<sup>1</sup> What about them makes us willing to trust? A general answer, for which there is some consensus in ethics, is their competence to do what we are trusting them to do and their motivation for doing it. Controversy exists in contemporary ethics around the question of how we want people we trust to be motivated to act. Following Annette Baier, many ethicists assume that the relevant motivation is goodwill: we want trusted others to be motivated by goodwill towards us.<sup>2</sup> But not all trust theorists agree, and some fail to give a clear answer to the question of motivation.<sup>3</sup> Part of what makes trust unique from other attitudes toward others, such as mere reliance, is the kind of motivation we expect from trusted others. Here, I argue that what we expect is not goodwill, but moral integrity, where I interpret integrity in light of recent philosophical advances in theorizing about integrity by Cheshire Calhoun and Margaret Urban Walker.<sup>4</sup> Their theories help us, I argue, to better conceptualize trust.

But it cannot only be moral integrity that we demand from people we trust. As Calhoun explains, what moral integrity involves is consistently doing what "one takes oneself to have the most moral reason to do."<sup>5</sup> If what another person's view of what she has the most moral reason to do differs from what I would take myself to have the most moral reason to do in similar circumstances, then I probably would not trust her. My trust, then, must entail the expectation that there is some

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similarity between what she and I stand for, morally speaking, in the relevant domain.

Our attitude toward people we trust, therefore, targets both their moral integrity and what they stand for. I add that, sometimes, it also concerns their perception of their relationship with us. Sometimes, for us to be optimistic that other people will be motivated to honor our trust, we have to expect that they share our view of the nature of our relationship.

## **2. Trust and Moral Integrity**

Let me begin by explaining why the relevant motivation is moral integrity rather than goodwill. Baier and Karen Jones interpret goodwill loosely to mean caring about the good of others, or having some concern for their welfare.<sup>6</sup> Both are imprecise about what that concern amounts to: Is it kindly or benevolent feeling, which is the vernacular sense of goodwill? Is it a will that is informed, necessarily, by considered judgments about the other's welfare? If so, are those judgments in some sense moral? If what Baier and Jones mean by goodwill is a kind of moral, or just, concern for others, then their view is not far off from my own that what we want from people we trust is moral integrity.<sup>7</sup>

For goodwill, meaning kindly feeling, to be what we trust in others, surely the feeling would have to be enduring to some degree, for we always expect the concern of trusted others to endure, at least over the period of time in which we trust them. Could it be true, then, that what we trust in others is reliable, kindly feeling? There are two reasons why not: We can trust people without expecting them to feel kindly toward us, and trust can be betrayed when the trusted person is motivated by such feelings but does not do the right thing in the circumstances.

Especially when we trust people without expecting them to have specific concern for us, we can trust without being optimistic about their kindly feelings. Sometimes we trust others to do something for us, or to be concerned specifically with promoting our interests; other times, we trust people to behave in a certain way toward others (such as when I trust someone to be honest with others). I call the former "trust with specific concern," and the latter "trust without specific concern." Whether people we trust have any feelings or concern for us is irrelevant to our trust in them when our trust does not demand specific concern. Yet even when it does, optimism about their kindly feelings may not be a feature of our trust. For example, it is conceivable that a patient would trust a physician to be motivated by a commitment to provide him with good health care without assuming that the physician has kindly feelings for him. Particularly in trust relations between patients and specialists, such as surgeons, kindly feelings need not exist.

However, if someone *did* have kindly feelings toward us and they were reliable feelings, would knowing that not be a good reason to trust that person? Consider a relationship between a family physician, Dr. Young, and his patient, Todd. If Dr. Young reliably expressed kindly feelings toward Todd, could Todd not trust Dr. Young even without knowing whether he is committed to promoting the welfare of his patients? The problem is that Dr. Young could be motivated by those feelings and still betray Todd's trust. Say that what Todd trusts most of all in Dr. Young is that he will respect Todd's autonomy, and Dr. Young is committed to doing so (where that requires that he disclose information to Todd about his health status and his health care options). If Dr. Young were to develop reliable and kindly feelings toward Todd and was motivated because of those feelings to be dishonest with him about his health status, then he would be betraying Todd's trust. He would be failing to inform Todd of any potentially serious health problems, not because he thinks it is his moral duty to prevent Todd from experiencing distress (Dr. Young is committed to promoting patient autonomy), but because he has a strong desire not to cause Todd any distress. In that case, Dr. Young would be acting on kindly feelings without doing what Todd is trusting him to do. Thus, Todd's trust in him could not be grounded in kindly feelings.

Trust is usually incompatible with serious forms of deception unless deception is necessary to shield the trusting person from severe harm. If Todd became clinically depressed and suicidal, then it might be compatible with his trust in Dr. Young for Dr. Young to withhold information from him about a serious illness, at least temporarily. But even when it is not necessary to deceive others to protect their welfare, kindly feelings can encourage deception if those feelings are strong enough. What we want, ultimately, from trusted others is not kindly feelings, but a commitment to doing what is right in the circumstances. In the scenario above, the right thing for Dr. Young to do, both from his perspective and from Todd's, is to disclose information to Todd about his health status, since disclosing it is respectful of his autonomy.

But is it not a bit overblown to say that what we want from people we trust is for them to "do the right thing"? Maybe we just want them to make considered judgments in determining how to best serve our interests, rather than have their kindly feelings motivate them in ways that might subvert our interests. Thus, we still might trust their goodwill but only if it is informed by their judgment. That idea is compelling; but one aspect of our attitude toward trusted others is not taken into account. Consider a situation where someone we trust uses his considered judgment to evaluate our interests and he acts accordingly, but then he ignores his responsibilities to others in

the process. For example, what if Dr. Young were good at respecting Todd's autonomy, but he also gave preferential treatment to Todd, even over patients who were suffering more than him and who had arrived at Dr. Young's office first? Many people in Todd's place would be appalled, and insist that was not what they were trusting their physician to do. Presumably, then, I have misconstrued Todd's interests by implying that Dr. Young could satisfy them by simply respecting Todd's autonomy. Assuming that Todd is a decent guy, his interest could not be to have others suffer for his own sake. But even if he were not at all decent, it would not be in his interest to see his physician treating his patients unfairly; Todd may be disturbed by such treatment if only because it suggests to him that one day Dr. Young might treat *him* unfairly. Either way, what Todd is trusting Dr. Young to do *is* the right thing. He trusts him to be motivated by judgments that are not merely considered, but that are moral.

The above objections to the idea that we want people we trust to be motivated by goodwill, interpreted as kindly feeling or considered judgment, reveal that what we really want them to be motivated by is moral integrity. We want them to have an enduring commitment to acting in a morally respectful way toward us and we want their actions to accord with that commitment.<sup>8</sup> Having integrity means that your actions are integrated with what you stand for, where having moral integrity means that they are integrated with what you stand for morally speaking. When Dr. Young fails to disclose important information to Todd about his health status, he compromises his own moral integrity, and in doing so, betrays Todd's trust.

Let me defend that position on trust and moral integrity by responding to the following objections. (1) Having optimism about the moral integrity of trusted others suggests (in light of a common understanding of integrity) that we want them to act as perfect moral agents, which is unrealistic. (2) It implies that we expect them not to be motivated by feelings of affection at all, which seems untrue of many trust relations. (3) The desire to maintain one's moral integrity sounds too self-centered for what we want from those whom we trust, especially when what we want from them is "specific concern." (4) And lastly, moral integrity is too sophisticated a concept to be what children trust in adults; yet the trust of children is surely paradigmatic of trust.

To reiterate the first objection, relying on trusted others to have moral integrity implies that we expect them never to bow to temptation or pressures from others; but that must be too much for what we expect of trusted others. Integrity is commonly defined merely in terms of one's ability to resist temptation or challenge, so that the paradigm of integrity turns out to be the person who acts on what she stands for without

fail. As Walker explains, that view ignores that we often ascribe integrity to those who “own up to and clean up messes”<sup>9</sup>—that is, to people who take responsibility when they fail to meet a commitment because they were under too much pressure from others or they experienced some momentary weakness of will. As long as they make amends for whatever problems they caused, we would still say that they had integrity. Walker defines integrity “as a kind of reliable accountability”<sup>10</sup>; it concerns how reliable we are in living up to important commitments, but also whether we are willing to be accountable for failing to meet our commitments on some occasions.

But are people who fail to meet their commitments, yet are still accountable for their actions, also trustworthy? That might depend on how often they neglect their responsibilities and create “messes” for others. Usually we do not conclude after someone fails to meet a single commitment that he is untrustworthy, unless, perhaps, the relevant commitment is extremely important. However, if someone *regularly* fails to honor his commitments due to temptation, say, or the pressures of everyday life, then we would say that he is untrustworthy, even if he does clean up after himself. But we would also say that he lacks integrity. A person with integrity takes his moral commitments seriously, which means that he does not bow to temptation regularly, nor does he regularly make commitments to others that he knows he cannot keep.

Although regularly bowing to temptation is inconsistent with having integrity, regularly acting on one’s desires, as long as one’s desires are compatible with a commitment to doing what is right, is not inconsistent with integrity. If acting with integrity meant acting solely from the commitment to doing what is right, then integrity would not be what many people trust in one another. For example, intimate partners usually trust that the other will act out of feelings of affection rather than out of moral duty. It is consistent with a person’s having moral integrity that she often acts from feelings of affection, as long as her actions are regulated by a commitment to doing what is right. The idea of that commitment playing a regulative function—limiting the sorts of feelings on which we can act—comes from Barbara Herman. Herman distinguishes between secondary motives, which restrict the ways we can act, and primary motives, which provide us with the motivation to act.<sup>11</sup> The commitment of a person with integrity to act morally serves as a secondary motive, regulating her conduct, when it permits her to do what she desires to do. When what she desires to do is something immoral, her commitment to doing what is right takes over as her primary motive and prevents her from acting on that desire. Only when that commitment serves as her primary motive is she forced to act against her immediate desires, or against feelings of affection. At other

times, she can act wholly on such feelings and still have moral integrity.

One might continue to object that we trust others to be motivated by a desire to maintain their integrity because it may sound as though we were expecting them to be concerned primarily for themselves (especially if one accepts traditional philosophical accounts of integrity). We do not expect people we trust to be self-centered, especially those whom we trust to have specific concern for us. Traditional theories of integrity, such as those of Bernard Williams and Gabriele Taylor,<sup>12</sup> describe integrity as a virtue of an agent who remains committed to life projects, or to whatever values he endorses, despite the consequences that might have for others. Those theories suggest, in other words, that integrity is a personal virtue of an agent who is able to maintain an integrated self.<sup>13</sup> However, as Calhoun explains, guarding our integrity involves more than just guarding ourselves from disintegration. She argues that integrity must be a social virtue as well as a personal one because people with integrity “stand for something,” and no one stands for anything only for themselves. They do it “for, and before, all deliberators who share the goal of determining what is worth doing.”<sup>14</sup> Calhoun explains that in taking a stand, we offer to others our best judgment about how we *and* they should live and be treated in our society.

However, standing for something must involve more than just offering our best judgment, and so must integrity, one would think, if it is to count as a social virtue. To fully defend her thesis about the social nature of integrity, Calhoun needs to emphasize that in taking a stand, we take responsibility for ensuring that what we stand for is preserved or established. That kind of responsibility is “forward-looking,” to use a term of Claudia Card’s, whereas “reliable accountability” is often merely backward-looking.<sup>15</sup> Since integrity involves responsibilities that move in either direction, a person with integrity cannot be self-indulgent or merely self-protective.

The view that integrity involves forward- and backward-looking responsibilities allows us to make sense of how a child could trust in another person’s moral integrity. One might assume that for young children, moral integrity could not be what they trust in their parents. And since the trust of children is central to our conception of trust (along with the trust of friends or lovers, arguably, and the trust of a client in a professional), I must have it wrong about relevant motivation in trust relations. However, to be trusting of another person’s moral integrity, one does not need a sophisticated understanding of the concept of integrity. If children trust that their parents will care for them and will make things right when things go wrong, then they are trusting their parents to fulfill forward- and backward-looking responsibilities. Hence, they are trusting their moral integrity.

Those who act with integrity act on what they take to be the best moral reasons for everyone to act; however, they do not necessarily act on reasons that are morally correct. Of integrity in general, Calhoun writes that it “hinges on acting on one’s own views, not the right views (as those might be determined independently of the agent’s own opinion).”<sup>16</sup> Integrity is about personal integration, not only about social responsibility; and therefore, to have integrity, it is crucial that the agent act on values that *she* endorses. Nonetheless, with *moral* integrity, there might be minimal substantive restrictions on what values a person with that kind of integrity can endorse. We tend not to recognize vicious dictators or serial killers as people who might have moral integrity. However, we can conceive of people whose moral values are somewhat different than ours as persons with integrity, on the assumption that every moral value of our own is not entirely objective. Uncertainty surrounding our moral values allows us to acknowledge moral integrity among people with whom we have some moral disagreements. We accept that what it means for them to act on their moral values is the same as what it means for us to act on our own.

### 3. What the Trusted Other Stands for

Because people with moral integrity do not necessarily agree on what is right, it cannot just be moral integrity that we expect from those whom we trust. We care about *what* they stand for, not just about whether they will act on what they stand for. For example, Todd does not trust Dr. Young simply to act on whatever values Dr. Young accepts as the right values. Todd expects him to endorse specifically the value of respect for patient autonomy. Consider a different example involving intimate partners named Josie and Marie. In trusting Josie, Marie must care not only about whether Josie intends to live up to her commitment to Marie, but also how Josie conceives of that commitment. Say that, above all, Marie trusts Josie to be an emotionally supportive, loyal, and honest partner. In that case, she cares about whether Josie shares with her a commitment to being emotionally supportive, loyal, and honest in intimate relationships. If Marie did not know or suspect that of Josie, she probably would not trust her as a lover. I argue that a further feature of trust is the expectation that what the trusted person stands for, morally speaking, is similar enough to what we stand for (as far as we know what that is) that we can count on that person to do what we are trusting her to do.

To trust others, usually we need some sense of what they stand for so that we can know whether they are likely to act in the way that we would expect them to if we were to trust them. The way that we expect them to act depends on what we perceive to be morally acceptable ways to act. For example, what Josie expects from any partner she trusts is loyalty and

honesty because that is what she believes is important in intimate relationships. However, to say that she simply expects loyalty and honesty is a bit vague, since she might not trust a lover who defines loyalty as avoiding all conversations with people to whom she might be sexually attracted. We need to know enough about how people we trust conceive of their moral commitments that we can count on them in certain ways. Since we often trust people to act in certain ways only within particular domains, what is most important is that we know where they stand in the domain in which we trust them.

Is it realistic, though, to claim that before we can trust others, we need to have some idea of where they stand, morally speaking? Do we not sometimes trust without knowing ahead of time that others are committed to acting in the ways that we want them to in the relevant domain? What about when we accept the help of a stranger when our groceries have fallen all over the street? Some of us seem to be able to do that sort of thing without being aware of what the other person stands for. But would we actually trust the stranger if we assumed that she is likely to steal our groceries or beat us over the head while we are bending down to pick them up? No. How could we assume anything, though, about where her moral commitments lie if we have never met her before? We could on the grounds that it is reasonable to assume that other members of our society share at least some values in common with us. If we could not assume that—either because we knew that we were wildly eccentric and had totally unique values, or because we were recent immigrants to this country and were uncertain about which values people held in common here—then we would have a lot of difficulty trusting other people.

Now, what if someone does not know what he should expect from others, not because of cultural difference, but because he is uncertain about what he stands for? Consider a ten-year-old boy, who might stand for some things, but not enough things that he knows what he should expect from people in many situations. Would it be possible for him to be trusting, then, in those situations? Without knowing what he should expect, presumably he could not figure out whether he should be trusting others given what they stand for. However, if he admired what they stood for, generally speaking, then he could trust them, even without having specific expectations regarding their behavior. He could trust his parents in that way if he admired them, for example. By “admiration,” I mean simply “looking up to” the other, which is something a child could do who is even younger than ten. Small children tend to look up to their parents and to rely on them to be caring, and in doing so, they express what is akin to admiration for their parent’s values.

Furthermore, an adult who is uncertain about what she values in a particular context could trust someone else whose

judgment she admires. A pregnant woman who admires her obstetrician's judgment, for example, could trust him to decide what is best for her with respect to prenatal diagnosis even if she had no idea what her own values concerning that option should be.<sup>17</sup> There, she would be trusting her obstetrician, not because what they both stand for is relevantly similar, but because what he stands for is presumably consistent with what she would hope to stand for in that context.

One might object that in the cases I have just described, admiration for the other's values is a *consequence* of trusting, rather than something that makes the trust possible. The child admires his parent's judgment and the patient admires her physician's because there is trust in their relationships. However, there is no reason to assume that admiration could not precede trust or that trust and admiration could not develop simultaneously, existing in equal degrees. What I have called "admiration" may grow or diminish alongside of trust in a child's relationship with his parent, for example.

Thus, an expectation about and/or admiration for what people stand for, morally speaking, is an element of our trust in them. One could add that our trust tends to grow or diminish as our knowledge of what others stand for increases. Furthermore, the amount of evidence we need about how similar their values are to our own will depend on what is at stake for us by trusting them. For example, there is more at stake in trusting a lover to move in with us than there is in trusting one to stay overnight twice a week. Presumably, we would want to know more about the values of our lover in the first case than we would in the second before trusting that person.

What if we could guarantee somehow that our lover's values were the same as ours without relying on that person's moral integrity? Could we not, then, trust our lover? What about abusive relationships, in other words, where one party manipulates the other into holding distorted views about love and loyalty? For example, Marie could coerce Josie into believing that loyalty to Marie should involve never speaking to other women, so that Marie could rely on Josie to be committed to that kind of "loyalty" in their relationship. Marie would not be expecting Josie to act on what she stood for (i.e., to act with moral integrity); rather, she would be relying on her to act on what Marie herself stood for. But if that were so, would we still want to say that Marie *trusts* Josie?

#### 4. Trust as Opposed to Mere Reliance

As Baier urges, when we expect others to act in certain ways only because they have been coerced or because they have a nonmoral disposition to so act, we are merely relying on them, rather than trusting them.<sup>18</sup> Reliance is an attitude toward another person's competence: where as long as that person is

motivated to do what they are competent to do, it is irrelevant to us what kind of motivation they have for acting. Thus, reliance is compatible with sleazy motives (e.g., hostility, hatred), with motives that are morally indifferent, or with positive motives, including moral integrity. I assume, therefore, as Baier does, that trust is a form of reliance. What I call “mere reliance” is when we are optimistic that someone will act from a motive other than moral integrity. For example, I might be optimistic that my surgeon will perform my surgery competently not because I feel that she has any moral integrity but because I know that she does not want to get sued.<sup>19</sup> There, the language of trust would seem out of place. But it would not be out of place because I would necessarily behave differently with the surgeon who fears social sanctioning, as opposed to the surgeon who acts with moral integrity. I might be willing to put my life in the hands of either surgeon as long as they were equally competent as surgeons.

What is the difference, then, between such cases? According to Richard Holton, when we expect people to act out of selfishness or out of duress, we are not trusting them, for we would not feel betrayed if they were to fail to do what we were relying on them to do. We would feel betrayed, however, if we had been trusting them to do it.<sup>20</sup> Feeling betrayed is the expected emotional response to broken trust, but it is not a feeling we would have toward someone on whom we merely relied. For Holton, what is unique about trust, compared to mere reliance, is that when we trust, we adopt a stance of readiness to feel betrayed.

But such a stance of readiness alone cannot be what distinguishes trust from reliance. The response of betrayal is a negative moral assessment we make of people’s behavior when they fail to honor commitments that we had trusted them to meet. If they do not do what we had trusted them to do through no fault of their own, then we would not say that they have betrayed us. Since betrayal has a moral element to it, feelings of betrayal are only appropriate toward people whom we had expected to act morally. Thus, what makes trust different from reliance is not merely, or even ultimately, that the response of betrayal is unique to broken trust. Trust and mere reliance are distinct because we expect trusted others, unlike those on whom we merely rely, to be motivated by a moral commitment.

We can be unaware that someone intends to act out of sleazy or selfish motives and still be trusting her, rather than merely relying on her. Our trust would simply be misplaced. Where the trusted one lacks integrity and relies on the “successful cover-up of breaches of trust” to keep the trust relation going, there is trust in the relation but it is “morally rotten,” according to Baier.<sup>21</sup> Not all trust theorists agree, however. Both Jones and Judith Baker assume that trust requires not merely optimism that the trusted person will be concerned for our welfare, but

*actual* concern for our welfare.<sup>22</sup> Jones asserts that when people we trust rely on the concealment of breaches of trust, their relationship with us is one of reliance, not trust. Similarly, Baker argues that trust, like friendship, is a relation that one party can destroy by being deceitful even if the other party is not aware of the deceit. Jones and Baker are focusing on a specific way in which we use the term "trust." We often say that trust is missing from a relationship when one party is deceiving the other successfully. But do we really mean that there is no trust left, of any kind, in the relationship? Surely we would still say that the duped party *trusts* the other party. Any adequate theory of trust must make room for misplaced trust.<sup>23</sup>

We can also trust and be wrong that there are similarities between what the trusted person stands for and what we stand for, or would hope to stand for. For trust to thrive, it is important only that our expectation about those similarities persists, and, of course, that we remain optimistic about the moral integrity and competence of the other person.

### 5. The Trusted Person's Perception of Our Relationship

Another feature of our attitude toward the motivation of trusted others, a feature that is relevant only to certain kinds of trust relations, is that we expect people we trust to interpret the nature of our relationship similarly to the way we do. If they conceive of our relationship differently, then they may not welcome our trust. Adding that feature takes care of the problem of unwelcome trust, and it concerns our attitude specifically toward *whether*, as opposed to *how*, people we trust will be motivated to act.

Jones discusses the idea of unwelcome trust in "Trust as an Affective Attitude." She argues that when people do not want us to trust them, they are not objecting to our optimism about their competence or about their goodwill. Nor would they be objecting to our positive attitude toward their moral integrity or about the fact that we admire what they stand for. Rather, what they object to is our desire that they do something for us. Jones interprets that as an objection to the expectation that they be "directly and favorably moved by the thought that we are counting on them." She adds that expectation to her trust theory partly in order to solve the problem of unwelcome trust.<sup>24</sup> However, to assume that it is a feature of all trust relations is to ignore that we do not always count on people we trust to do something for us. Moreover, when we do rely on them to have specific concern for us, we might not expect them to acknowledge our trust and be favorably moved by it. Surely, I can trust strangers not to be cruel to me, for example, without expecting them to be moved by my trust. On my theory of trust as optimism about another person's moral integrity, we can merely expect the trusted person

to be moved by her moral commitments, rather than by the thought that we are counting on her.

The problem of unwelcome trust would only arise, then, in cases where we trust others to have specific concern for us. Let us consider that kind of trust in more detail. How does optimism about someone's moral integrity translate into an expectation, in some cases but not others, that the person will behave in a certain way *towards us*? Clearly, it entails such an expectation only if the moral commitments on which we are expecting that person to act require him to promote or respect our interests. While some moral commitments demand that we respect the interests of everyone (e.g., our duty not to commit murder), others require only that we behave in a certain way toward people with whom we have a special kind of relationship. For example, although I may have a duty to be honest on some level with everyone, I am not morally required (I do not think) to be as honest about my feelings with everyone as I am in an intimate relationship. Similarly, I am not morally obligated to be as concerned for the welfare of others as I ought to be for my own family members and close friends. Often what we trust in others (including parents, lovers, and professional people) is that they do something for us that they would not do for just anyone. That is, we trust them to act on commitments that are "relationship-specific."

Unwelcome trust is a potential problem when we expect others to have what I shall call *special* concern for us. When we trust people to have "specific concern" that they are committed to having toward everyone, unwelcome trust should not be an issue. However, if we trust them to have "special concern"—that is, to do only what they are committed to doing in certain kinds of relationships—then our trust might be unwelcome. It would be if we were expecting them to interpret our relationship with us differently from the way they interpret it. For example, if a student trusts his teacher to be emotionally supportive in the way that a parent would, but the teacher does not think of (and does not want to think of) her relationship with the student as a kind of parent-child relationship, then the student's trust would be unwanted. However, by trusting his teacher in that way, the student must be expecting her to think of their relationship as more like a parent-child relationship than a teacher-student one. Without that expectation, he could not be optimistic that she would be emotionally supportive in the way that she would with her own child.

Dealing with unwelcome trust by including the expectation about how the other perceives our relationship allows us to explain some cases where trust is unwelcome but is, nonetheless, justified. A person who is not favorably moved by my trust might have encouraged me to have expectations that are only appropriate to the kind of relationship. *I think we have. That*

person does not welcome my trust but she *should* welcome it because my perception of our relationship is accurate.

## 6. Conclusion

Our attitude toward the motivation of trusted others is more complex than mere optimism about their goodwill. It entails optimism, specifically, about someone's moral integrity, coupled with two expectations in cases where our trust involves "special concern." That analysis may seem so complex as to be implausible, given how pervasive trust is and how easily some of us seem to be able to trust others. However, it is important to recognize that a trusting attitude (and each feature of it) need not be conscious for trust to exist. As Baier writes, "there is such a thing as unconscious trust."<sup>25</sup>

Sometimes, we only become aware of the important elements of trusting attitudes when trust is missing; that is, in evaluating why we *distrust* some people, we come to realize what is important to us in trust relations. According to my account, our evaluations of distrust should lead us to one or more of the following conclusions: that we are pessimistic, rather than optimistic, about the other person's competence or moral integrity;<sup>26</sup> that we suspect that person does not have certain values in common with us or that he does not share our perception of our relationship. Those seem to be clear avenues toward distrust, and they originate in the conception of trusting attitudes I have defended here.

## Notes

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<sup>2</sup> See Annette Baier, "Trust and Anti-Trust," *Ethics* 96 (1986): 231–260.

<sup>3</sup> Disagreement comes from Richard Holton, "Deciding to Trust, Coming to Believe," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 72 (March 1994): 63–76. Ambiguity about the relevant motivation in trust relations can be found in Trudy Govier's book, *Dilemmas of Trust* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998). For example, she writes that when we trust someone, "we believe in his or her basic integrity; we are willing to rely on him or her" (91), and that when we trust ourselves, we have a firm belief in our "own good character and good sense" (95), or at least a "positive sense of our own motivation" (99). So do we want the trusted person to act with integrity with good sense, with any kind of positive motivation, or with any motivation compatible with relying on someone?

<sup>4</sup> Cheshire Calhoun, "Standing for Something," *The Journal of Philosophy* 92.5 (1995): 235–260; Margaret Urban Walker, "Picking Up Pieces: Lives, Stories, and Integrity," *Moral Understandings: A Feminist Study in Ethics* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 103–129.

<sup>5</sup> Calhoun, "Standing for Something," 249.

<sup>6</sup> See Baier, "Trust and Anti-Trust," 237, for example, and Karen Jones, "Trust as an Affective Attitude," *Ethics* 107 (1996): 4–25.

<sup>7</sup> There is some evidence in Baier's work that she would accept the interpretation that goodwill involves the use of our moral judgment. In *The Tanner Lectures*, she mentions the importance of using our judgment in expressing our goodwill; "for, as Aristotle emphasized, judgment must continually be used when we aim at contributing to someone's well-being" (118). Since that aim is moral, at least in Aristotelian ethics, the kind of judgment Baier is referring to must be moral.

<sup>8</sup> Still, as I explain below, people we trust can be motivated entirely by kindly feelings as long as those feelings cohere with a commitment to doing what is right.

<sup>9</sup> Walker, "Picking Up Pieces," 118.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>11</sup> See Barbara Herman, "On the Value of Acting from the Motive of Duty," *Philosophical Review* 90: 359–382. In *Kantian Ethics Almost Without Apology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), Marcia Baron borrows the primary/secondary motive distinction from Herman and argues that the Kantian good will is structured in such a way that the agent's sense of duty plays a regulative function, as her secondary motive (*Kantian Ethics Almost Without Apology*. [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995], 129). In borrowing that distinction myself from Kantian theorists (i.e., Baron and Herman), my intention is not to suggest that the commitment to act morally that regulates the actions of persons with moral integrity is equivalent to a Kantian sense of duty, necessarily. It could just as easily entail an Aristotelian sense of virtue, or, presumably, a care ethicist's sense of moral responsibility.

<sup>12</sup> As cited in Calhoun, see Bernard Williams, "Persons, Character, and Morality" and "Moral Luck," *Moral Luck: Philosophical Papers 1973–1980* (New York: Cambridge, 1981), and "Integrity," in J. J. C. Smart and Bernard Williams, *Utilitarianism: For and Against* (New York: Cambridge, 1973); and Gabrielle Taylor, "Integrity," *Pride, Shame, and Guilt: Emotions of Self-assessment* (New York: Oxford, 1985).

<sup>13</sup> What it means to have an integrated self on these theories differs, and Calhoun explains in detail where the differences lie ("Standing for Something," 236–252).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.

<sup>15</sup> It is backward-looking in the sense that we assume responsibility for our causal role in creating a certain state of affairs. For a more detailed account of the distinction between forward- and backward-looking responsibilities, see Claudia Card, *The Unnatural Lottery: Character and Moral Luck* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), especially 25–29.

<sup>16</sup> Calhoun, "Standing for Something," 250.

<sup>17</sup> I do not pretend that it is a typical scenario where a woman allows her physician to make decisions for her because she admires what he stands for. A substantial number of women in prenatal care might agree to what their physicians recommend because it seems

easier to agree than to disagree. In other words, agreeing is the path of least resistance.

<sup>18</sup> To quote Baier, when one relies on someone's "dependable habits, or only on their dependably exhibited fear, anger, or other motives compatible with ill will toward one," one is not trusting, but merely relying ("Trust and Anti-Trust," 234). But whether "dependable habits" can distinguish trust from mere reliance is questionable, as Diana Meyers pointed out to me in personal conversation. Moral integrity itself is probably a dependable habit since integrity is a virtue, and virtues tend to be formed out of habit. To use the language I have adopted in this paper, it is probably out of habit that people with moral integrity allow their commitment to do what is right to regulate their primary motives for acting.

<sup>19</sup> Cases where social sanctions allow for *mere* reliance are probably rare; usually, sanctions are not so restrictive that they require people to do exactly what we need them to do. Where there are gaps between our needs and what the sanctions dictate, we have to trust that others will attend to our needs carefully.

It is also important to emphasize that social sanctions can make room for trust in relationships where otherwise, trust probably would not exist. My view is not that trust is only present where institutional constraints are absent. As Patricia Williams poignantly illustrates in "The Pain of World Bondage," adding a formal or legal dimension to a relationship can make trust possible, especially in relationships where one party is stereotyped as untrustworthy by virtue of her socio-political status (e.g., by virtue, in Williams case, of being a Black woman) (see *The Alchemy of Race and Rights: Diary of a Law Professor* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991], 146–165).

<sup>20</sup> Holton, "Deciding to Trust, Coming to Believe," 65, 66.

<sup>21</sup> Baier, "Trust and Anti-Trust," 255. Baier also thinks that trust can be morally rotten if the "truster relies on his threat advantage to keep the trust relation going." But as I have argued, if we manipulate others into doing what we are relying on them to do, then we are *merely* relying on them, not trusting them.

<sup>22</sup> Jones, "Trust as an Affective Attitude," 19; Baker, "Trusting Relations," (presented at the Canadian Philosophical Association Annual Conference, May 1996).

<sup>23</sup> One reason why we would not want to negate that category is that, without it, we would not be able to explain the fact that some forms of uncooperative social behavior such as "[e]xploitation and conspiracy ... thrive better in an atmosphere of trust" (Baier, "Trust and Anti-Trust," 231, 232). One method for ensuring the continuation of the oppression of a social group is to ensure that its members are convinced of the trustworthiness of their oppressors. The trust they are encouraged to have makes them vulnerable to further oppression.

<sup>24</sup> She also adds that feature to solve another problem: that we can rely on people to be benevolent and competent without trusting them. We only trust them, according to Jones, once we expect them to be moved by the thought that we are counting on them (10). Below, I disagree with that point.

<sup>25</sup> Baier, "Trust and Anti-Trust," 235.

<sup>26</sup> Karen Jones argues that distrust is an attitude of pessimism about the motivation or competence of others ("Trust as an Affective Attitude," 7).