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OXFORD

The Underlying Unity of Hope and Trust

Matthew Ratcliffe*

ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the relationships between hope and trust. I suggest that different kinds of hope and trust relate to one another in different ways, which I conceive of in dynamic terms. I propose that the movement of hope and trust has a unifying context: the changing structure of a human life and its dependence on other people. I further argue that the most fundamental forms of hope and trust are inextricable. Together, they comprise a diffuse way of anticipating things in general, which could equally be described in terms of "faith." This sustains a life structure upon which more specific forms of hope and trust depend.

1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I show how a consideration of the relationships between hope and trust can illuminate the nature of both, as well as their roles in our lives. I acknowledge from the outset that there will be no straightforward answer to the questions of what hope and trust consist of and how they interrelate. Both take a range of subtly different forms, with different analyses picking up on some of these rather than others. Nevertheless, I set out an integrative approach to these various phenomena, which accommodates and also accounts for the differences between them. This involves situating attitudes of hope or trust within their wider context, thereby emphasizing what they *do* in our lives and—with this—how they relate to one another. I suggest that hope and trust play essential roles in sustaining, revising, and restoring the intricate and dynamic organization of a human life. Different variants of hope and trust reflect the different ways in which a life structure depends for its sustenance and development upon interpersonal and social relations. Underlying all such attitudes, I propose, is a unitary orientation that can be conceived of in terms of both hope and trust.

In referring to a *life structure*, I have in mind an arrangement of interconnected projects, pastimes, commitments, relationships, and habits. Together, they comprise a habitual orientation that shapes how we experience, think about, and interact with our surroundings. It is relative to this that we experience things as mattering in various interrelated and temporally consistent ways. For instance, upon entering one's workplace, specific entities, situations, and events are experienced as salient, interconnected, and practically relevant, thus serving to focus and structure one's thoughts and activities. These patterns of significance or mattering ordinarily reflect

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what is of current importance relative to longer-term values associated with one's professional roles, projects, and responsibilities. The point applies equally to experiences of one's home, which also reflect a longer-term framework of relationships, cares, concerns, commitments, and responsibilities. Thus, a life structure is at the same time a way in which the surrounding world appears, a backdrop against which one thinks and acts (Ratcliffe 2017; 2022). There is considerably more to be said here. For instance, when something appears significant in light of one's projects, is the relevant experience perceptual in nature? And how exactly does emotional experience fit in? However, in considering the roles of hope and trust, I will emphasize two points that are independent of such details: (a) a life structure is not fixed or static; (b) its sustenance and development over time depend on relations with other people.

A flourishing human life is essentially dynamic; it involves the sustenance, loss, and transformation of projects, commitments, pastimes, relationships, and habitual expectations. Retention, loss, and revision of life structure are all integral to processes of development and change. Integration of new projects and relationships into a life frequently requires the reorganization and loss of others. However, other aspects of one's life survive the transition largely unchanged, providing a degree of consistency and stability. For instance, a new job might not impact significantly upon family life. Sustenance, loss, and revision of life structure thus interact over time in cohesive ways. Often, the changes that arise are subtle, mundane, and gradual. On occasion, though, our lives undergo sudden, profound, and temporally extended disturbances. When this happens, there may be a sense of having lost direction, a lack of clarity over what the future holds or what ought to be done (Ratcliffe 2022, ch. 4).

In what follows, I will show how we can think of hope and trust in terms of this dynamic. They are implicated in—and indeed essential to—the sustenance, revision, and repair of life structure. In unremarkable circumstances, where habitually established structure remains largely intact, talk of hope and trust may be limited to fairly trivial states of affairs, as when hoping that someone gets here on time or trusting them to feed the cat for a day. However, as we will see, the nature and profundity of the roles that they play in our lives can be made explicit by turning to exceptional circumstances that disrupt the course of a life. Hope and trust contribute to the navigation of upheaval in a number of different but integrated ways, sustaining us as we falter.[1]

2. VARIETIES OF HOPE AND TRUST

I will start by accepting that hope and trust both encompass attitudes of various different kinds. Several competing accounts of hope have been offered in recent years. Discussions tend to proceed by first identifying a supposedly *standard* account, according to which hope involves desiring that *p* and assigning some level of probability to *p* or—at least—taking *p* to be possible. Most contributors accept that, although desiring something and believing it to be possible are necessary for hope, the combination is not sufficient. Hence, there is an additional ingredient to be identified, and this is where most of the disagreements arise. According to Bovens (1999, 674), hope further involves the "mental imaging" of what is hoped for. Pettit (2004) suggests instead that "substantial"—as opposed to "superficial"—hope involves acting *as though* something will come about, in ways that increase either its likelihood or that of other desirable outcomes. Meirav (2009) objects that such predicaments remain equally compatible with despair (as when someone who is ill assigns a probability to recovery, imagines it, acts as though it will happen, and still lacks hope). Instead, Meirav suggests, hope is distinguished from other intentional attitudes by one's dependence on an external factor in order to realize an outcome and one's attitude towards that factor.

Philosophical discussions of trust often follow an analogous course. Although one might think of trust as a simple matter of reliance, many instances of trust and, more specifically,

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personal trust, are said to involve something more. Thus, although reliance may be necessary, it is not sufficient. For instance, Baier (1986) suggests that trust further involves vulnerability and dependence upon the "good will" of others. Jones (2004) also emphasizes acceptance of one's vulnerability before others. But it is arguable that trust comes in different guises. For instance, Becker (1996) distinguishes between cognitive and noncognitive trust, while also recognizing that trust can be primarily a matter of credulity, practical reliance, or security.

Alongside the need to sharpen up overly permissive conceptions, another common theme in discussions of hope and trust is *normativity*; both can be appropriate or inappropriate to situations. Complementing Becker's (1996) distinction between credulity, reliance, and security, the relevant norms may be epistemic, practical, and/or moral (although Becker does not construe security in exclusively moral terms). As Baier (1986) has argued, there are situations where it is morally right or wrong to trust. Where trust concerns the acceptance of testimony, it is equally subject to epistemic norms. In addition, whether it is appropriate to trust often hinges on whether someone can be relied upon practically to do something, regardless of whether they are held morally accountable. Hope is likewise subject to moral, epistemic, and practical standards. It is morally wrong to hope for certain things, epistemically misguided to hope for the impossible, and a mistake to focus one's energies on something practically unachievable. It has also been proposed that certain *ways of hoping* are appropriate and others inappropriate. According to McGeer (2004), "good hope" involves empowering others and fostering a community of hope, while bad hope can involve depending excessively upon others in order to realize outcomes or fixating on certain goals without sufficient flexibility. Similar claims could be made about certain forms of trust, such as overly naive or dependent trust.

Given all of this, the task of specifying how hope relates to trust cannot be a straightforward matter of determining how an attitude of type A resembles, differs from, overlaps with, and interacts with an attitude of type B. Before we can do that, we need to figure out what exactly we are talking about. And this raises a methodological problem, at least if the task of characterizing hope and trust is taken to be descriptive rather than revisionary or stipulative. In offering counterexamples to analyses, formulating alternatives, and then finding further counterexamples to those alternatives, it is unclear how to distinguish between (a) gradually homing in on the right accounts of hope and trust, and (b) sliding endlessly between subtly different conceptions that are all at play in everyday discourse. For instance, Martin (2011, 150) defends a "standard" account of hope, as a matter of "endorsed desire plus uncertainty," by taking certain other proposed features of hope to be accompaniments rather than constituents. But suppose that everyday discourse accommodates both and moves from one to the other depending on context. There would then be no basis for arbitrating between the two positions.

So, it could well be that talk of hope and trust is both pluralistic and context-sensitive.[2] Even so, one could maintain that all forms of hope are distinguishable from all forms of trust. I can hope that a person or institution will do something without trusting them to do it. And, when I trust somebody to do something, I need not hope that they will. Instead, it could be a matter of my having unwavering, habitual confidence in them, as when I trust my wife to care for our children while I am away. There is thus a double dissociation between the two. Nevertheless, hope and trust remain closely related, at least in some of their guises. For instance, it has been argued that trusting someone involves hoping that they will respond in a manner consistent with one's trust and, in addition, that such an attitude can have a therapeutic or transformative effect on that person's conduct, empowering them to respond in the hoped-for way (McGeer 2004, 2008; McGeer and Pettit 2017).

We can, I suggest, break the tie between unitary and pluralistic conceptions of hope and trust by making clear *why* there are indeed different subtypes and also *how* they relate to one another. This requires an appreciation of the roles that hope and trust play in our lives. In particular,

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it is informative to reflect on differences between experiences of hope and trust with specific contents and other experiences that are more diffuse. These differences can be made salient by reflecting on what it is to *lose* hope and trust. Let us start by considering some first-person descriptions of losing trust during the COVID-19 pandemic. With colleagues, I conducted a phenomenological survey in 2020, investigating how social restrictions imposed during the early stages of the pandemic had affected various aspects of experience, including how people experienced the surrounding world, time, interpersonal interactions, various emotions, and their own bodies (Froese et al. 2021).[3] Responses to the question, "How, if at all, has the current situation affected your ability to trust other people?" were suggestive of different degrees and kinds of trust, some more localized than others. Some participants reported a loss of trust or an active distrust relating to something specific—a person, group of people, type of person, or institution. For example:

> My trust in our government has disappeared.
>
> I feel as if the media is hard to trust now even more.
>
> I do not trust people who are breaking social distancing rules as they seem to not care about others' wellbeing.
>
> I don't trust the scientists fully. If they are so informed, how come they all got Covid?

Practical, epistemic, and moral themes are variably prominent in these responses. One might not trust scientists to provide knowledge, trust the Government to manage a situation, or trust certain people to behave in morally responsible ways. Whichever the case, the loss of trust or attitude of distrust has a specific object: not trusting C, or not trusting C to do *p*.[4] However, other responses describe a diminution or loss of trust that is wider ranging and not so selective:

> I trust the average person a bit less now. I think I had a naive view of people's ability to cope with stress and to think in a communitarian way.
>
> I trust people a lot less, I feel people have become a lot more selfish because they haven't stuck to the social-distancing rules.
>
> I don't trust anybody to keep social distancing. I believe I must always be on my guard when there are people around.
>
> I cannot really trust anyone outside of the home as, even if they are being sensible, I have no idea if they have been exposed at all.

As these testimonies indicate, loss of trust or active distrust can extend to *other people in general*, but again the emphasis varies. Sometimes, moral concerns are at the forefront: "they" cannot be depended upon to do the right thing. In other instances, there is more emphasis on the threat posed by the virus: "they" are all potential sources of infection, offering an impersonal threat in place of more usual possibilities for interpersonal interaction. Conversely, not trusting others and feeling unsafe around them can involve construing *oneself* as an object of their suspicion or fear, as a potential virus-carrier or lawbreaker *in their eyes*: "I feel paranoid that every time I leave the house someone will report me or when I'm in a supermarket and cough, I worry I will get kicked out for suspected virus symptoms."

In reflecting on more diffuse losses of trust such as these, which encompass how one experiences and relates to the social world as a whole, we can start to appreciate the interdependence between hope and trust. Let us assume that hoping for *p* involves at least being able to entertain

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the *possibility* of the hoped-for prospect arising. To this, it can be added that the actualization of almost every possibility that is of consequence in our lives depends somehow on other people acting or not acting in certain ways. We cannot sustain the hope that *p*, where *p* depends on other people acting benevolently and they offer only the prospect of harm. Without some degree of trust in others, hope becomes unsustainable.

A unifying theme here is that of *anticipation*. Trusting or not trusting someone involves a certain *way* of anticipating them (regardless of which specific analysis of trust we endorse). Trusted others offer certain kinds of significant possibilities as opposed to others. They appear dependable, often in a distinctively *personal* way, rather than offering—say—the prospect of betrayal or humiliation. But this *way of anticipating* envelops more than just our interpersonal relations. Given the extent to which a human life depends upon interactions and relations with others, almost all of the significant possibilities we anticipate depend in one or another way on what is anticipated from particular people, groups of people, institutions, or others in general. A pervasive loss of trust therefore implies a wider-ranging shift in our sense of the kinds of possibilities that the future holds: "Confidence in other people has lowered. I don't trust people will learn much from this experience, and the world will be worse when the pandemic ends."

Both hope and trust accommodate a spectrum of anticipatory experiences, from specifically directed attitudes towards people and possibilities that relate to particular aspects of one's life (as when hoping for *p* or hoping that B will do *q*, so that one can then accomplish *r*) to wider-ranging patterns of anticipation upon which much of one's life structure might depend. Losses of trust are especially challenging when associated with events that profoundly disrupt one's life. Trusting relations are integral to the ability to sustain whatever fragile structure is left and to engage with one's social surroundings in ways that facilitate the establishment of new structure (Ratcliffe 2022, ch. 7). They are thus inextricable from hope, which essentially involves having the sense that such possibilities remain.

First-person accounts of upheaval sometimes relate the nonlocalized erosion or loss of trust not only to losing hopes with specific contents, but also to diminution or loss of a *capacity* for hope. So, in contemplating the nature of nonlocalized trust and hope, it is important to distinguish attitudes with very general contents from something that such attitudes presuppose. Consider experiences of bereavement, which sometimes involve both a profound loss of life structure and losing the very person to whom one would otherwise have turned for support in navigating upheaval. This can lead to a nonlocalized shift in *how* one anticipates things—everything appears uncertain, unpredictable, unstructured, and unsafe. But how one experiences and engages with one's situation also depends to a considerable degree on what other people continue to offer. Take the following account: "I felt that my whole world was turned upside down. As a child I had trusted everything would be alright and when it wasn't I was shattered by it. Nothing I had believed in before could be trusted." Here, "trust" could be construed in terms of a general sense of confidence or reliability, rather than a more specifically *personal* form of dependence. However, when we experience a wide-ranging loss of habitual confidence (as when a previously established life structure has been profoundly disrupted), specifically *interpersonal* trust has a crucial role to play. Where it remains, it sustains the potential for a kind of nonlocalized hope: an orientation towards the future that includes possibilities for navigating disruption and restoring a wider sense of confidence and predictability.

With the loss or disruption of a life structure that was previously taken for granted, we often turn to others in order to sustain what remains and to open up new possibilities. The sense that we can still depend on them in relevant ways is integral to the capacity for trust. When this falters or is lost, as sometimes occurs during profound grief, what we lose is not exhausted by a comprehensive inventory of habits, pastimes, projects, commitments, relationships, and plans. In addition to losing numerous *contents* of a life, we also experience a

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change in its overall *form*. Deprived of certain ways of engaging with loss, which point to the potential restoration of habitual confidence, we are left with a pervasive sense of abandonment, being cast adrift:

> Despite, as a couple, having several friends, they all vanished after the funeral. This was devastating and very hurtful. I wanted to lash out at them but was advised to let it go. The feeling of loss and abandonment was made far, far worse by their reactions and having to forge new friendships was hard. My trust in others has gone.

In reflecting on such experiences, it becomes increasingly apparent that a prerequisite for *having hope* is being able to maintain a host of different relationships with other people, all of which incorporate trust of one or another kind:

> When you are no longer in a couple, other couples do not include you in social activities.
> You have to make new friends among those in a similar situation.
> Family do not understand and think that you should get over it.
> You, yourself, try to get over it but the grief stays with you.
> I am conscious of being seen as a burden, rather than a valued family member or friend.
> Activities once enjoyed when done together fail to appeal when contemplated alone.
> You are conscious that the good part of your life is probably behind you.
> You are reminded of your own mortality.
> Things that were normal become frightening.
> You no longer look forward with hope but with trepidation at being able to cope with loneliness.[5]

Hope and trust are thus integral to a larger, dynamic process that involves the sustenance and transformation of life structure. Together, they also constitute the sense that new structure remains possible, enabling one to *let go* of what can no longer be sustained. One might think of hope and trust as occasional attitudes with more or less specific contents, which have especially important roles to play in engaging with change, loss, and significant uncertainty. However, I suggest instead that they are ubiquitous in our lives. Where phenomenologically conspicuous attitudes with specific contents are absent, hope and trust persist in the form of a nonlocalized, prereflective, and unitary way of anticipating events, upon which the sustenance of a cohesive and consistent life structure continues to depend. More localized and salient forms of hope and trust arise when this anticipatory structure becomes differentiated to varying degrees, as happens with its actual or anticipated disruption. They contribute to its sustenance, revision, and restoration.

3. ONE-PLACE HOPE AND TRUST

As we have seen, hope and trust sometimes involve anticipating that something specific will or could happen. But the content of the attitude accommodates varying degrees of specificity and determinacy. One might hope for an end to a current situation, without being able to envisage what form it could take. Similarly, trusting someone need not involve trusting them to act in a way that is fully specified in advance; a range of actions that one did not contemplate beforehand might later be judged to have met one's trusting expectations. However, I have also indicated that hope and trust can both consist of a more general orientation towards the future. This is not directed at anything in particular; it is a backdrop against which specifically directed attitudes of trust and hope are formed. When the content of a life is disrupted, the *form* of that

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life (an overarching way of anticipating things) can be disrupted as well. Nevertheless, it may continue to incorporate a sense of possibilities for change, restoration, and development. In contemplating a more specific scenario where A hopes that *p* or trusts B to do *q*, without any reference to this larger context, we risk sliding into uninformative abstractions, cut off from the movement of a life into which such attitudes are integrated.

What I am proposing is consistent with the more widely held view that hope and trust are not exhausted by two- or three- place relations of the form "B hopes that *p*" and "C trusts D to do *q*." It has been suggested that there are more basic forms of one-place hope or trust where one simply "has hope" or "has trust," which are taken for granted in most situations and therefore easily overlooked. Nonlocalized hope amounts to a nonspecific sense of what the future holds, the kinds of possibilities that it offers (Ratcliffe 2015, ch. 4). Nonlocalized trust is—for many of us—a default attitude towards other people and social situations in general, similarly involving a sense of the kinds of significant possibilities associated with them.

Here too, we find that discussions of hope and trust proceed in analogous ways: intentional attitudes of one or more kinds are said to presuppose something more fundamental. Turning first of all to hope, one such account is developed by Lear (2006), who considers a case of cultural devastation where shared practices and meanings that were once habitually engrained are altogether lost. With this, life structures that depended on these practices for their intelligibility are also gone. Consequently, Lear observes, concrete hopes are lost—one cannot hope coherently for scenarios that have ceased to be intelligible. Nevertheless, he identifies another form of hope, "radical hope," which can be—but is not always—sustained in such circumstances and comprises a shared orientation for weathering and negotiating prolonged upheaval. Devoid of specific content, it amounts to the bare sense that new possibilities remain, that the future still offers the prospect of positive change and meaningful development, even though it cannot currently be conceived of in more concrete terms.

Radical hope might be thought of as something that people draw on only occasionally. However, I think it is more plausibly construed as an orientation that was in place all along—a nonspecific sense of the future, which is somehow sustained in the face of cultural collapse rather than summoned only in such exceptional circumstances (Ratcliffe 2015). It becomes phenomenologically salient when a larger pattern, involving the actualization of familiar possibilities that relate to projects, pastimes, and relationships, is disrupted. A way of anticipating that was once seamlessly integrated into that pattern is then salient, but conspicuously devoid of specific contents.

Others have employed different terminologies to convey something similar. For instance, Marcel (1951, 46) identifies a form of hope that transcends "every kind of representation." More recently, McGeer (2004, 105) has described hope not as a distinctive intentional attitude, but as an "energy and direction" that shapes our orientation towards the future and—with this—the "regulation and development of our own agency." In considering the approaches taken by several others to nonlocalized hope, Webb (2007, 68) contrasts "goal-directed" with "open-ended" forms of hope, while also suggesting that both categories accommodate different subtypes.

Similar distinctions have been drawn between trusting attitudes and what we might call *having trust*, where the latter amounts to a default way of anticipating what other people have to offer, something that also implies a set of wider-ranging expectations (Ratcliffe, Ruddell, and Smith 2014). The work of Løgstrup (1956/1997) is informative here. He construes trust as our default way of encountering others, from which occasional, more localised episodes of doubt and distrust deviate. Trust, for Løgstrup, has developmental and constitutive priority over distrust. In ordinary circumstances, everything that we experience, think, and do depends upon nonlocalized trust in a way that it does not depend upon distrust. Trusting interactions are ubiquitous,

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as interpersonal encounters—even the likes of mundane conversational exchanges—involve rendering ourselves vulnerable to the agency of others. In remaining open to others in a certain, ordinarily prereflective manner, "we deliver ourselves over into the hand of another" (Løgstrup 1956/1997, 14).[6] In a largely complementary discussion, Baier (1986, 234) remarks on how we "inhabit a climate of trust as we inhabit an atmosphere," something we only notice in its absence. Jones (2004) refers to this nonlocalized trust as "basal" security, and Becker (1996) similarly emphasizes the theme of "security."

These fundamental forms of hope and trust are not merely interdependent—they are inextricable aspects of a unitary phenomenological structure, akin to two sides of a coin. In short, the same nonlocalized way of anticipating comprises both our sense of what the future holds and what we expect from other people in general. Our descriptions of it can emphasize either its futural or interpersonal aspects, thus lending themselves to talk of either hope or trust. When this underlying unity is disrupted in certain ways, it gives rise to more differentiated attitudes with variably determinate contents. Differences between these more specific forms of hope and trust reflect the different *ways* in which we depend on other people. To see how it all fits together, let us take our lead from Løgstrup's observation that, when we encounter other people, we cannot avoid having some effect upon one another:

> A person never has something to do with another person without also having some degree of control over him or her. It may be a very small matter, involving only a passing mood, a dampening or quickening of spirit, a deepening or removal of some dislike. But it may also be a matter of tremendous scope, such as can determine if the life of the other flourishes or not. (Løgstrup 1956/1997, 15–16)

This is also a key theme in several more recent accounts; trust involves placing ourselves in the care of another person (and also in a position of caring for them), in a way that involves acceptance of vulnerability. This, it has been argued, can be mutually "empowering," nurturing the very attitudes we depend upon (McGeer 2004; 2008; McGeer and Pettit 2017).[7] It can be added that we are affected by different people in different *ways*, depending on the nature of our relationships with them and what is at stake in a given situation. Some of Løgstrup's descriptions indicate a phenomenon that is prereflective, affective in nature, and ubiquitous. We are influenced by an interplay of expression, gesture, and tone that is integral to dialogical interaction, which shapes how we *feel* and, with this, how our surroundings appear significant: "by our very attitude to one another we help to shape one another's world" (Løgstrup 1956/1997, 18). In emphasizing this aspect of interpersonal experience, it becomes clear that acceptance of vulnerability is, for most of us, unavoidable throughout the course of social life. However, there are many additional ways of being affected by others. For example, a feeling of awkwardness or disconnection is a far cry from being the victim of an act of betrayal with considerable repercussions. What is placed "in our hands" when we are trusted therefore varies considerably; it could be a "passing mood" or an "entire destiny" (Løgstrup 1956/1997, 26).

Løgstrup (1956/1997, 19) adds that the structure of interpersonal exchanges is shaped and regulated to a large extent by shared conventions and associated expectations, without which interpersonal interactions would become unmanageable. Trust also involves anticipating that people will, for the most part, respect such conventions, helping to establish, preserve, and develop them. How we are affected by others further depends on the *types* of relationships that we have with them. We relate in importantly different ways to partners, other family members, close friends, professional colleagues, police officers, bank managers, collectives of various kinds, and passers-by. We trust them in different ways too, which involve different balances of moral, practical, and epistemic concerns. For instance, the intelligibility of specific projects and

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pastimes may presuppose a relationship with a partner, as when we do various things *for* that person. The distinctive shape of a life also depends on a range of other relationships with friends and family members, which can similarly involve shared habits, pastimes, projects, and commitments. However, a wider-ranging sense of being secure in the world further depends on how we relate to other people in general, including those we meet only in passing. Trust in the likes of police officers and medical professionals also plays a distinctive role when certain things go wrong. The shape of a human life thus depends in various ways on a host of different relations with other people. Indeed, almost every aspect of a life can come to rest on interpersonal expectations of one or another kind. Other people provide structure, give us the confidence to let go of structure, act as guides when structure is lost during times of upheaval, and contribute to the development of new structure in the form of new or altered projects, relationships, and patterns of habitual anticipation.

Sometimes, trust is simply a matter of confident expectation, taking something or someone to be reliable in a given situation. On other occasions, it involves a distinctively *interpersonal* attitude. Depending on the nature of the relationship and its significance, this attitude may reflect practical, moral, epistemic, and/or emotional dependence. It might involve expecting someone to act in an idiosyncratic way or to abide by certain general norms. It might involve trusting someone to perform a prescribed role with confidence or, alternatively, a behaviour that one expects from others in general, such as a willingness to state the time if asked or to show concern as one lies there injured. Hence, the diversity of trusting attitudes reflects the diversity of interpersonal relations and how they contribute to our lives. The same points apply to hope: what we hope for and how we hope both depend on more specific ways in which we relate to others. Such relations influence which possibilities remain open, the manner in which those possibilities might be actualized, whether and how we can draw on others in striving to actualize what we hope for, and whether we can hope for new hopes by accepting others as guides during times of disorientation and uncertainty.

Simply "having trust" and "having hope" are required for the sustenance and development of a life structure, while more localized attitudes of hope and trust contribute to its retention, loss, repair, and transformation. Thus, underlying and integrating what might look like disunity is a singular, unitary style of anticipation. What is anticipated from other people is inseparable from what is anticipated from the world as a whole. Basic hope or trust involves the confident anticipation of possibilities that sustain a life structure and point to the prospect of positive change. When this default way of anticipating things is disrupted to varying degrees and in different ways, more differentiated forms of hope and trust emerge, which are implicated in its sustenance, restoration, and transformation. Even when a life is in disarray, to such an extent that practical confidence breaks down, retention of an ability to rely on others points to the prospect of recovery. What we have is thus a dynamic and changeable, but unitary, basis for the living of a human life. It seamlessly incorporates the moral, the practical, and the epistemic, along with a sense of what it is to encounter and relate to someone in a distinctively personal manner.

Various different philosophical approaches and terminologies have sought to pin down and articulate this same basic sense of confidence or security. For instance, when Wittgenstein (1969) refers to a primitive, animal-like form of "certainty," what he has in mind is—in my view at least—a pervasive, habitual way of anticipating that is integral to *going about one's business* (Ratcliffe 2017, ch. 6). Although this might be thought of in broadly epistemic terms, it also has connotations of security (*Sicherheit*). Pleasants (2008) suggests that certain "basic moral certainties" can also be conceived of in Wittgenstein's terms, as fundamental to our engagement with the social world. Construing them as integral to a unitary style of anticipation enables us to accommodate this.

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What I have sketched is equally consistent with Erikson's (1963/1995) description of "basic trust" as something that is established during infancy, through interactions with caregivers, and differentiated over the course of development. However, a formulation that captures things especially well is that of Merleau-Ponty (1945/2012), who suggests that the habitual world we take for granted in our everyday experiences, thoughts, and activities has an implicit, overarching *style*. He conceives of this as akin to the style of a person, something that is dynamic, idiosyncratic, open to change and development, and temporally integrated—the way they walk, talk, and interact with others. All of this hangs together in a cohesive pattern of temporal unfolding that we come to anticipate without being able to attribute it to more specific properties of the person (Ratcliffe 2022, ch. 5). Merleau-Ponty maintains that we inhabit a world as we embody a style; our experience as a whole is characterized by a cohesive pattern of unfolding. The world, in the relevant sense of the term, is not an object of experience, but the "style of all styles" (Merleau-Ponty 1945/2012, 345). Given the numerous interdependencies between the confident unfolding of a life structure and what we anticipate from other people, this dynamic structure could equally be described in terms of trust and hope. More specific attitudes of hope and trust work together in sustaining and repairing this larger pattern of confident, habitual expectation.

Merleau-Ponty also refers to style in terms of perceptual "faith"; it is a sort of groundless confidence that all of our experiences, thoughts, and activities rest upon.[8] Consistent with this, I have suggested that human experience incorporates a certain orientation towards the future, which does not consist in a set of propositional beliefs. This can be lost or "shattered" under certain conditions of adversity, as the capacity for trust falters and the prospect of positive change appears ever more remote. It is debatable whether and to what extent this "faith" should be construed in terms of relying upon something that is implicitly or explicitly *personal* in nature. One could maintain that encountering the future through undifferentiated hope and trust involves relating to what Marcel (1951, 47) calls an "absolute Thou." Erikson (1965/1995) likewise suggests that basic trust has a personal quality; an infant's trust in a parent serves as the basis for that person's later reality, as well as for religion. Alternatively, we might think of this underlying orientation as neither specifically personal nor impersonal in character, but as a basis from which more differentiated attitudes emerge, some of which are personally oriented and others not. Through this organization, we encounter both the personal and the impersonal in structured and temporally consistent ways.[9]

NOTES

1. Hope and trust can also play prominent roles in circumstances that do not involve significant upheaval, but where things are still *not right* with one's life, as when one hopes for radical change and trusts others to help bring it about after many years of lacking something important. We also hope for good things that will change our lives for the better, even when all is well. My account of the relationships between hope and a dynamic life structure can be applied to these scenarios as well.
2. See, for example, Simpson (2017) and Owens (2017) for two different ways of acknowledging the plurality of trust.
3. All of this data, consisting of over 1,800 responses and amounting to 574,000 words in total, is now freely available in a publicly accessible archive. See Froese et al. (2021) for details.
4. There are differences between not trusting someone and actively distrusting them. However, for current purposes, the relevant contrast is between trusting and not trusting, where the latter might accommodate a range of attitudes. I do not provide a more specific account of *distrust*.
5. The accounts of grief quoted here were collected via a qualitative survey of grief experiences conducted as part of the AHRC-funded project "Grief: A Study of Human Emotional Experience." For further details, see Ratcliffe (2022).
6. For Bernstein (2011) as well, trust is tied to a form of mutual recognition that is largely tacit in ordinary circumstances but essential to the living of a human life, a kind of "orientation" that originates in a love experienced during childhood.

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7. See also Jones (2012, 64) for the view that trust involves a form of reliance on others, the recognition of which influences how they respond: "we can count on the other responding to our counting on them." Darwall (2017) offers a complementary account of trust as a distinctive "second-person attitude" that calls for reciprocation.
8. In so doing, Merleau-Ponty draws explicitly on themes in earlier work by Edmund Husserl (Ratcliffe 2017; 2022). Elsewhere, I have discussed how loss of this "faith" can approximate the kind of experience associated with what Judith Herman has called "complex posttraumatic stress disorder" (Herman 1997; Ratcliffe, Ruddell, and Smith 2014).
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