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Elements in Ethics

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Moral Psychology

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Abstract: This Element provides an overview of some of the central issues in contemporary moral psychology. It explores what moral psychology is, whether we are always motivated by self-interest, what good character looks like and whether anyone has it, whether moral judgments always motivate us to act, whether what motivates action is always a desire of some kind, and what the role is of reasoning and deliberation in moral judgment and action. This Element is aimed at a general audience, including undergraduate students without an extensive background in philosophy.

Keywords: moral psychology, egoism, altruism, character, virtue, motivation, moral judgment

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