Seminar in Ethical Theory: "The Practical Point of View"

The focus of the seminar will be the “practical” point of view, or the point of view we take up as agents deliberating about what to do. It has frequently been alleged that as rational deliberators, we are necessarily committed to viewing ourselves and our agency in a distinctive light. For instance, it has been argued that we are committed to regarding ourselves as free, or as responsible, or to viewing our actions as aimed at some good, or at any rate as subject to objective normative constraints. We will be looking at several attempts to defend these and related claims in order to better understand the general idea that the distinctive nature of the practical, or deliberative point of view provides a basis for a conception of ourselves as morally responsible agents.