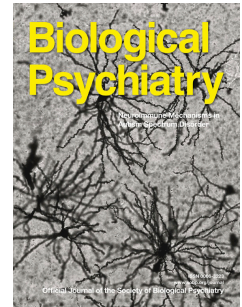


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# **Altered medial frontal feedback learning signals in anorexia nervosa**

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## **Abstract**

### **Background**

In their relentless pursuit of thinness, individuals with anorexia nervosa (AN) engage in maladaptive behaviors (restrictive food choices, over-exercising) which may originate in altered decision-making and learning.

### **Methods**

In this fMRI study we employed computational modelling to elucidate the neural correlates of feedback learning and value-based decision making in 36 female AN patients and 36 age-matched healthy volunteers (12-24 years). Participants performed a decision task which required adaptation to changing reward contingencies. Data were analyzed within a hierarchical Gaussian filter model, which captures inter-individual variability in learning under uncertainty.

### **Results**

Behaviorally, patients displayed an increased learning rate specifically after punishments. At the neural level, hemodynamic correlates for learning rate, expected value and prediction error did not differ between the groups. However, activity in the posterior medial frontal cortex was elevated in AN following punishment.

### **Conclusion**

Our findings suggest that the neural underpinning of feedback learning is selectively altered for punishment in AN.

## 1 Introduction

2 Anorexia nervosa (AN) is an eating disorder characterized by a relentless pursuit of thinness,  
3 mostly by self-starvation. Repeated maladaptive eating behaviors (1, 2) and extreme therapy  
4 resistance (3) in this enigmatic illness may originate from alterations in reinforcement learning such  
5 as increased sensitivity to reward or punishment and associated impairments in decision-making (4,  
6 5). Aberrant reward-based learning in AN may reflect an entrenched “habit” of restrictive food choice  
7 (6, 7). Similarly, it has been proposed that primary rewards (food) become conditioned as punishing,  
8 and aversive stimuli (hunger) as rewarding in the brain reward system of individuals with AN (8).  
9 However, the precise mechanisms underlying response to and learning from reward and punishment  
10 in AN are still poorly understood.

11 AN is consistently associated with low reward reactivity and high punishment sensitivity on  
12 clinical scales although important differences between subtypes (restrictive vs. binge-purging) may  
13 exist (9–13). Most laboratory evidence for altered feedback learning and value-based decision  
14 making in AN comes from impaired performance in the Iowa Gambling Task (IGT; 14, 15) - a paradigm  
15 used to measure choice behavior in the context of outcome (reward vs. punishment) uncertainty.  
16 However, reward processing is multifaceted and the typically reported IGT “net score” provides little  
17 insight into which aspect(s) might be altered in AN. Suggesting that AN patients may be particularly  
18 hypersensitive to punishment, patients have been also found to make less risky choices than healthy  
19 controls (HC) in another decision-making paradigm, the Balloon Analogue Risk Task (13). Further  
20 evidence comes from neuroimaging studies which found altered reward processing in response to  
21 disorder-related stimuli like food or taste (16–18) and secondary reinforcers (19–23). For example,  
22 neural response to punishment (monetary loss) has been found to be elevated in acutely ill  
23 adolescents in corticostriatal regions involved in valuation and action selection (21). Alteration in  
24 motivational and executive corticostriatal circuitry may also be associated with an impaired ability to  
25 flexibly adapt to change (24) and an apparently excessive amount of self-control (5, 25).

26 To gain a new perspective on feedback learning and decision-making in AN, we here apply  
27 the methods of computational psychiatry (26) which associate neurobiological signals with defined  
28 mechanistic steps, such as those needed to estimate the amount of reward associated with  
29 alternative behavioral options based on previous feedback. Compared to conventional analysis  
30 methods, this approach avoids i) associating neurobiological signals with subjective reports of  
31 patients (which depends on their ability to self-reflect and adequately verbalize mood states or  
32 experiences) and ii) the limitations of purely descriptive measures, such as error rates.

33 Intuitively, we expect healthy subjects to place greater importance on unexpected feedback  
34 in a changing environment, but to nearly disregard it in a stable one. The latter guards against

switching away from the preferred option in the presence of environmental noise, i.e. when the differences between expected and received rewards (also called reward prediction errors (27, 28)) are not due to a real change of contingencies. To probe these mechanisms in AN, we employed a reversal learning task in which the preferable choice was rewarded probabilistically (in 80% of all choices) and changed only after a learning criterion was achieved; thereby requiring participants to learn from feedback and adapt to changing reward contingencies. To analyze behavior, we compared a hierarchical Gaussian filter (HGF) model (29) with more classical reinforcement learning models (30). In the HGF model, the weight given to prediction errors is encoded in an adaptive subject-specific learning rate which is high for large environmental uncertainty, and low for small uncertainty.

Previous studies in healthy individuals (31–33) and other patient populations (34) have linked specific model parameters to activation in specific brain regions, e.g. posterior medial frontal cortex (pmMFC) for learning rate, ventromedial prefrontal cortex (vmPFC) for expected (subjective) value of a choice option and ventral striatum (VS) for prediction error. Given evidence of hypersensitivity to punishment in AN (9–12, 21, 35, 36), we hypothesized that patients' decision-making would be more affected by punishments (monetary loss) relative to HC and that learning from such negative feedback would be linked to altered activation in the pmMFC. The pmMFC spans the dorsal anterior cingulate cortex (dACC) and pre-supplementary motor area (pre-SMA) and is broadly implicated in reward-based decision-making and signaling the need for adjustments when behavioral goals are threatened such as when losses occur (35–37).

## Methods and Materials

### *Participants and Procedure*

72 females participated in this study: 36 acutely underweight AN (12-23 years old) and 36 pairwise age-matched HC (12-24 years old). Case-control age-matching was carried out resulting in a maximum difference of 1.7 years between the individuals within one pair (Supplemental Methods). AN participants were recruited from specialized eating disorder programs and underwent MRI within 96 hours after admission to behaviorally-oriented nutritional rehabilitation programs. Please refer to

Supplemental Methods for additional information on inclusion and exclusion criteria and clinical assessments. Clinical variables are reported in Table 1.

This study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Review Board and all participants (and their guardians if underage) gave written informed consent.

One AN participant (and her age-matched partner) had to be excluded due to low performance (Supplemental Methods and Figure S1).

### **Experimental paradigm**

We used a probabilistic reversal learning task adapted from Hampton et al., (33) (Figure 1) which includes probabilistic positive and negative monetary feedback and contingency changes according to a learning criterion (see below). In each of the 120 trials participants had to choose one of two symbols, referred to as option A and B. One symbol was designated as correct and led to monetary reward (+20cents) with a probability of 80% and to punishment (-20cents) in 20% of the cases (probabilistic errors). The choice of the 'wrong' symbol led to punishment and reward with inverted probabilities. With a probability of 25% the contingency reversed (change of the 'correct' symbol to the previously 'wrong' symbol) after at least four consecutive correct decisions since the last contingency switch.

### **Computational Modeling**

Our computational model followed the meta-Bayesian 'observing the observer' approach (40). Accordingly, an active decision-making agent makes inferences about the hidden "state of affairs" based on the feedback associated with each option (here: the expected values of option A and B on each trial), using a so-called 'perceptual model'. Subsequently, an 'observational model' predicted the ensuing behavioral responses.

We compared the performance of three perceptual models. In addition to (i) the widely used Rescorla-Wagner model with constant learning rate, we considered two alternative models: (ii) a HGF (29) because it allowed us to quantify different forms of perceptual uncertainty perceived by the agent and (iii) a Rescorla-Wagner model with an adaptive learning rate (41). Since Bayesian Model Selection (42) revealed that the HGF fitted behavior best across HC and AN patients as well as for both groups separately (Protected Exceedance Probability > .996), it was also chosen to fit the fMRI data (Supplemental Methods and Table S1).

The HGF (29) used is a Bayesian learning model that allows for individual differences through subject-specific parameters: the *meta-volatility* ( $\theta$ , 27) and the *tonic log-volatility* ( $\omega$ ). The *meta-volatility* determines how fast the environmental volatility is assumed to change, while the *tonic log-volatility* is a constant component of the log-volatility, and therefore has a modulating effect on the learning rate. The update equations for the expected values of each option are similar to those in basic Reinforcement Learning Models:

$$prediction(k) = prediction(k - 1) + learning\ rate(k) \times prediction\ error(k).$$

As in previous studies (31, 33, 41, 44), we used prediction errors ( $\delta^{(k)}$ ), implied learning rates ( $\alpha^{(k)}$ ), and expected values of the chosen option  $v^{(k)}$  as parametric modulators in the fMRI analysis.

The probability of an option to be chosen was a softmax function of its inferred expected value relative to the other option, which introduces another subject specific parameter, the *decision noise* ( $1/\beta$ ; Figure 1).

For a precise definition of the models and their update equations, see Supplemental Methods. For the implementation and inversion of the HGF, we used the Translational Algorithms for Psychiatry-Advancing Science (TAPAS) package (<http://www.translationalneuromodeling.org/tapas/>) with v4.10 of the HGF toolbox (using standard priors for the free model parameters).

## Statistical Analysis

### Behavioral Measures

We subjected eight measures to t-tests with group as independent factor: (i) The total amount of money won, (ii) the number of misses (invalid trials), (iii) the ratio of correct responses, (iv) the rate of contingency switches, (v) the log-model-evidence (LME) associated with the inversion of the HGF for each subject, and the trial-independent subject-specific parameters of the computational model, i.e. (vi) *log-decision noise*  $\log(1/\beta)$ , (vii) *tonic log-volatility*  $\omega$  and (viii) *log-meta-volatility*  $\log(\theta)$ .

The trial-dependent parameters (expected value  $v^{(k)}$ , prediction error  $\delta^{(k)}$  and learning rate  $\alpha^{(k)}$ ) and the reaction times (RT) were treated each within a  $2 \times 2 \times 2$  linear mixed model (after a logit and log transform respectively; Supplemental Methods) with response (correct/wrong) and feedback (rewarded/punished) as within-subject factors and group (HC/AN) as between-subject factor. Post hoc t-tests were corrected for multiple comparisons using a Bonferroni-correction.

### MRI Data acquisition

Structural and functional images were acquired between 8 and 9 am after an overnight fast using standard sequences with a 3 T whole-body MRI scanner (TRIO; Siemens, Erlangen, Germany) equipped with a standard head coil (details in Supplemental Methods).

### MRI Data Preprocessing

Functional and structural images were processed using the SPM8 toolbox (<http://www.fil.ion.ucl.ac.uk/spm/>) within the Nipype framework (45). Preprocessing steps included correcting for slice timing and motion, normalization, smoothing, and noise reduction using CompCor (46). For more details and information regarding image quality control see Supplemental Methods.

### MRI Data Analysis

#### First level analysis

In our main analysis, we implemented three different GLMs. All three models included a binary and a parametric modulation regressor of interest (trial-dependent parameter of the HGF),



each associated with an event lasting for 1 second and convolved with a canonical hemodynamic response function, as in previous studies applying computational modelling in a probabilistic reversal learning task (32, 41, 44). In particular, we modulated the (GLM 1) response event (assumed to start one second before the button press) with the expected value of the chosen option  $v^{(k)}$ , (GLM 2) the learning event (starting at feedback) with the implied learning rate  $\alpha^{(k)}$  (31, 41), and (GLM 3) the feedback event (starting at feedback) separately for rewarded and punished trials with the absolute value of the prediction error ( $|\delta^{(k)}|$ ; 25). Follow-up analysis considered a fourth GLM with two binary regressors of interest (and no parametric modulator), starting at feedback and lasting for 1 second, separating the rewarded and the punished trials. Additional nuisance regressors in all four models were the event of stimulus presentation (lasting 0 seconds), six realignment parameters, six principal noise components from the CompCor analysis, and one regressor for each motion or intensity outlier volume.

### *Second level analysis*

To verify that the task elicited the expected activation patterns, we first conducted whole-brain one-sample t-tests on the regression weights of the parametric modulators of the first level GLMs. To test for group differences, we then conducted independent samples t-tests on activation regressors and parametric modulators. We also implemented a whole-brain 2x2 mixed factorial ANOVA with group (AN/HC) as between- and feedback (punished/rewarded) as within-subjects factors on the 1<sup>st</sup> level coefficients from our follow-up GLM using GLMflex (<http://mrtools.mgh.harvard.edu>), which allows for the estimation of partitioned errors terms.

We report results as significant at a family-wise error rate FWE level whole-brain corrected using random field theory (47) with a false-positive rate  $\alpha < 0.05$ . In the case of non-significant whole-brain results in any of the three *a priori* defined ROIs (Supplemental Methods and Figure S2) corresponding to the vmPFC ( $v_{A,B}^{(k)}$ ), VS ( $\delta^{(k)}$ ), and pMFC ( $\alpha^{(k)}$ ), we computed small volume corrected (SVC) voxel-wise thresholds (FWE-SVC<.05).

## Results

### Sample Characteristics

There were no significant differences in age, IQ, or handedness score between the pairwise matched groups of AN and HC. However, as expected, AN had lower body mass index (BMI), higher eating disorder symptom and depression scores (Table 1). Differences in the Behavioral Inhibition Scale (BIS) or Junior Temperament and Character Inventory subscale 'harm avoidance' (HA) were not significant in the sample with neuroimaging data. However, in a larger sample with questionnaire data, that included the one used for the present study, AN patients had a significantly higher BIS and HA (Supplemental Results).

### Behavioral and Modeling Data

The results of the ANOVA on behavioral measures and on trial independent model parameters (and of the Mann-Whitney test on  $\omega$ ) are summarized in Table 2. There were no group differences for the number of correct answers and contingency reversals, for the total win and the number of misses. The LME and the subject-specific model parameters (inverse log-decision noise  $\log(\beta)$ , tonic log-volatility  $\omega$  and log-meta-volatility  $\log(\theta)$ ) also did not differ between the groups.

The results of the 2(HC/AN)×2(rewarded/punished)×2(correct/wrong) mixed model on the trial dependent model parameters and the reaction times are summarized in Table 3 (see also Table S5). The expected main effects and interactions of feedback and response on the learning rate, the prediction error and the expected value were reproduced [ (44, 48); Supplemental Results]. Most importantly, a group×feedback interaction indicating a higher learning rate on punished trials in AN was found [ $F(1,8262.6)=6.6$ ,  $p=0.010$ ; Figure 2]. This effect was not influenced by age (Supplemental Results, Table S4). Further explorative analyses indicated that increased learning rate after punishment in AN is not driven by HA or extreme underweight (Supplemental Results, Table S6).

### Imaging Data

In line with previous studies (31), BOLD activity in the pmPFC correlated with the changing (time-dependent) learning rate  $\alpha^{(k)}$  (Figures 3A, S5). Also as in previous studies (32, 33), activation in the vmPFC correlated with the changing expected value  $v^{(k)}$  (Figure S3). Furthermore, BOLD activation in the VS correlated with the changing prediction error  $|\delta^{(k)}|$  separately in rewarded and punished trials [Figure S3, (32, 33, 41, 44)]. Together, these findings corroborate our task and

analytical approach. Other significant activations are reported in Table S4. No group differences were found at FWE or FWE-SVC level.

More important regarding our hypotheses, given (i) the behavioral findings indicative of an increased learning rate in AN on punished trials (Figure 2), (ii) previous evidence of elevated sensitivity to punishment in AN (9, 12), and (iii) the linear correlation between learning rate and BOLD activity in pMFC as in previous studies (31, 41), we predicted altered activation in AN in the region associated with learning rate, specifically after punishments. To test this hypothesis, we calculated a 2(group) x 2(feedback) ANOVA. Critically, while no group difference in the pMFC was revealed on win trials, the BOLD response was elevated in this region in AN on punished trials. This group difference overlapped the cluster in which BOLD activity correlated with learning rate (Figures 3B, S4, Table S8; see also Figure S5). To investigate possible causal relationships, we conducted mediation analysis using the SPSS PROCESS toolbox (49). However, no mediation effects of the learning rate on the pMFC activation or vice versa were detected (Supplemental Results, Table S9). Moreover, exploratory analysis revealed no correlation between pMFC activation and BMI-SDS, BDI-II, EDI-2 or HA scores in AN (FWE-SVC).

## Discussion

We used computational modelling in combination with fMRI to provide insight into the neural mechanisms underlying decision-making and feedback learning in young, acutely ill AN patients. Bayesian Model Comparison (Methods) demonstrated better fit between a recently developed HGF model (29) and the behavioral data for both the AN and HC groups than more classical reinforcement learning models (30). However, AN patients were characterized by an increased learning rate on punished trials; possibly indicating hypersensitivity to punishment which has been observed clinically and empirically in AN (10, 12, 35). This finding suggests that when AN patients experience negative feedback, they question their beliefs to a greater degree than HC. On a neural level, time-dependent parameters of feedback learning correlated with BOLD activity in the same brain regions in both groups. In particular, consistent with previous model-based fMRI studies of decision-making and feedback-learning in healthy participants (31, 41), we found a significant correlation between learning rate and BOLD activation in the pmFC, a region involved in outcome evaluation and initiating adaptive adjustments accordingly (31, 38, 50). Most importantly, mirroring the behavioral group difference, BOLD activation was increased in this region in AN after punishment.

Our finding of increased pmFC activation after punishment in AN converges with recent evidence attributing a role of this region to the pathophysiology of the disorder. For example adolescent AN patients exhibited an elevated neural response to punishment in the “cognitive” zone of the dACC relative to HC in a monetary guessing task. (21). Conversely, Zastrow et al. (24) found decreased pmFC activation specifically on “shift” trials of a target detection task in AN. Altered pmFC activity has also been reported during temporal reward discounting (19, 51) and during inhibitory processing (52). Moreover, a recent resting-state functional connectivity study (53), found reduced connectivity between pmFC and the executive control network in adolescent AN. While these studies suggest altered pmFC functioning in AN, the direction of group differences vary and the possible interpretations range from altered conflict monitoring, excessive cognitive control and increased neural efficiency. Structurally, volume reductions in the ACC (including portions of the pmFC) in acutely ill AN have been related to deficits in perceptual organization and conceptual reasoning, while the degree of normalization during treatment was linked to clinical outcome (54). Using SPECT, reduced regional cerebral blood flow in the dACC extending into the pre-SMA was observed during the acute phase of the illness and after weight recovery (55). Our study gives additional support for

functional pmFC alterations in acutely ill AN using a novel approach that had been applied successfully in other disorders before (42–44). Taken together, our behavioral and imaging findings suggest that the elevated pmFC response in AN may help to explain the abnormally rapid learning rate following punishment.

Restrictive food choice and extreme resistance to treatment are just two examples of altered decision-making in AN. While previous laboratory investigations (14, 15) were relatively limited in their ability to isolate specific alterations, a recent cognitive modelling study of IGT performance found a “recency bias” in AN captured by a learning/memory parameter (58). Although the model did not uncover a group difference in a feedback sensitivity parameter, the finding that patients tended to base their decisions on recent experience is commensurate with our finding of increased learning rate in AN. The current evidence of altered decision-making in response to negative feedback is in line with notion of altered reinforcement learning in AN (1–5, 8) and, considered in light of similar recent findings (13), is suggestive of a particular sensitivity to punishment. Decision-making may be intact, however, in paradigms that don’t include negative feedback, at least in adolescents (19, 59). Nonetheless, these findings were made in predominately restrictive AN and future studies are needed to clarify potential subtype differences in reward and punishment sensitivity (10, 11). Furthermore, given the presumption that AN is characterized by altered general reward-related decision-making (4, 8, 19) and the lack of group differences in this respect in both the current study and other recent ones (21, 51), future research is also needed to clarify under which conditions the neural substrates of reward processing are aberrant in AN.

While our study was not designed to clarify whether altered decision-making causes AN or is a temporary effect of acute illness, correlation between punishment sensitivity and attachment insecurity has been reported (60). This suggests that, together with attachment style, a decision-making strategy geared toward loss avoidance may develop early in life. Speculatively, oversensitivity to negative feedback may contribute to the onset of AN. For example, negative comments from peers regarding physical appearance might be given exaggerated importance as an effect of an increased learning rate, and consequently, predispose (future) AN patients to change their nutritional habits and activity levels to lose weight (61). Indeed, it has been found that increased HA persists after recovery in AN, raising the possibility that such a trait exists premorbidly (62, 63).

At the neurobiological level, PET imaging studies found associations between HA and 5-HT functioning in various eating disorders (62). Interestingly, a low 5-HT state, probably due to reduced

tryptophan intake because of food restriction (63–65) has been suggested for acute AN (62). In healthy participants (66), it was found that acute tryptophan depletion (ATD), a method for transiently reducing cerebral 5-HT levels, was associated with increased BOLD responses in a region of the dorsomedial PFC overlapping the pmFC during a probabilistic reversal learning task, especially after punishment. Given the role of 5-HT in altered neural mechanisms during feedback learning and evidence suggesting normal or even increased 5-HT levels in recovered AN (62, 67), future studies in weight-recovered AN targeting the pmFC during feedback learning are of great interest.

At a more qualitative level, our model-based approach suggests that learning and decision-making activate the same brain regions similarly in both AN and HC. This finding fits neatly with our model comparison: by using different computational models of feedback learning, we found that the behavior of both groups was better explained by the Bayesian HGF model than Rescorla-Wagner models (either with fixed or flexible learning rate) suggesting that, equally to controls, AN patients place differential importance on prediction errors depending on their perception of environmental volatility. Note that for other psychiatric disorders such as binge eating disorder (57), schizophrenia (68) or alcoholism (69), Bayesian Model Selection indicated that patients' behavior was guided by different (typically less efficient) decision-making strategies. For example, in adolescent ADHD, patients choice behavior was better explained by a Rescorla-Wagner model with constant learning rate whereas for HC the HGF provided a better fit (56). Previous computational modeling studies in AN (16, 70) used a temporal difference model with a fixed learning rate (28) to derive prediction error measures in passive taste reward learning tasks, but model parameters and model comparison data were not reported in these studies.

Our study has to be seen in the light of the following limitations: First, we focused on young (mostly adolescent) patients with acute AN. While this has the advantage of minimizing secondary effects of prolonged malnutrition on cognition, it provides no indication whether parameters such as the learning rate can be seen as biological markers. Therefore, studies measuring patients longitudinally after weight restoration or complete recovery are needed. However, although patients were in a state of undernutrition, they did not show reduced performance and the behavioral results were not driven by particularly underweight patients (Supplemental Results, Table S6). Second, although we compared three computational models of behavior and identified one with best fit for both groups (suggesting that the general strategies employed in AN are normal), there may be better models that lead to different conclusions. Third, although our sample size was large relative to most

fMRI studies in AN and the employed task had a comparable number of trials as in similar clinical studies (21), the power of our study to detect all relevant between-group effects (e.g. reward-related) may be limited and future studies with more observations in larger samples are needed. Fourth, the group difference in self-reported HA was not significant in the present study, presumably because of lack of statistical power (Supplemental Results), and the expected correlation between HA and learning rate after punishment was not found (Supplemental Results). Therefore, alternative explanations of increased learning rate in AN including impaired memory (58) and uncertainty regarding present beliefs are also plausible. However, an increased learning rate specifically after punishments indicates that an exaggerated importance is placed to negative feedback, despite uncertainty due to the probabilistic nature of contingencies.

Computational approaches focusing on learning mechanisms appear to be particularly promising with respect to the detection of basic mechanisms contributing to the development and maintenance of mental disorders. Altered decision-making has been linked to treatment outcome in AN (71) and quantification of individual differences in learning mechanisms have the potential to guide the development of new therapeutic strategies that directly aim at the modification of such behavior patterns. Given the present results in patients with acute AN, a stronger focus on increasing self-confidence (72) and the ability to tolerate criticism might foster therapeutic success.

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## Figure Legends

**Figure 1. Top: Time course of the experiment.** First, two abstract stimuli were presented. The participant had up to 2s time to make a choice. After the participant had selected one stimulus (by left or right button press), a fixation cross was presented for 4s. Finally, positive or negative feedback (monetary reward or punishment) was displayed for 1s followed by a jittered inter-trial interval (fixation cross) for 4 to 8s. **Bottom left: The Hierarchical Gaussian Filter (HGF).** Graphical representation of the perceptual (HGF) model used in this work. Polygons represent quantities that change with time, while circles denote time-independent, subject-specific parameters. Arrows indicate dependency of one variable on another. While hexagons represent states that satisfy the Markov property, such that the state at trial  $k$  also depends on the state at  $k - 1$ , diamonds contain quantities that do change with time, but do not depend on their previous state.  $\beta$  is the inverse *decision noise*,  $\theta$  the *meta-volatility* and  $\omega$  the *tonic log-volatility*.  $x_1$  is the probability of reward for each option A and B,  $x_2$  is the tendency towards reward and  $x_3$  is the time-dependent part of the log-volatility.  $y$  are the responses given by the participant. In our observational model  $y$  does not depend directly on the environmental volatility  $x_3$ .

**Bottom right: The softmax choice rule.** Probability that option A is chosen according to the observational model used in this work (softmax).  $v_A^{(k)} - v_B^{(k)}$  can be computed from  $x_1$ , see Supplemental Methods. A small value of *decision noise* ( $1/\beta$ ) implies that the most valuable option is chosen with high probability. The  $\beta$  values chosen correspond to the mean on the entire sample plus minus the standard deviation (see Table 2).

**Figure 2. Increased learning rate after punishment in AN.** The critical group $\times$ feedback interaction (significant also after Bonferroni correction across the four tested models  $p(\text{corrected}) = 0.04$ ) was followed up with post-hoc comparisons which revealed that learning rate is greater in AN than in HC on punished trials (mean difference (SE) = 0.083(0.036)). Error bars reflect 95% confidence level intervals.

**Figure 3. A: Correlation of BOLD activity after feedback with learning rate  $\alpha$ .** Learning rate was computed within a Hierarchical Gaussian Filter and the expected pattern of activation in the pMFC (31, 41) across all participants (whole-brain one-sample t-test) was reproduced. **B: Increased BOLD activity in AN following punishment.** Increased BOLD activity in AN relative to HC following punishment as revealed by a whole-brain independent samples t-test is depicted on the same slice. A list with the peaks of activation is reported in Table S4. We display regions where the signal is significant at a FWE $<.05$  level determined with random field theory. The color scale shows one sample t-test values.

## Tables

**Table 1. Group characteristics.** Comparisons of demographic and clinical variables were examined using independent two-sample t-tests, differences in task relevant variables were examined using one-way ANCOVAs controlling for IQ. Means and standard deviations (SD) are given.

	AN		HC		test statistics	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
<b>Demographic variables</b>					<b>T</b>	<b>p</b>
Age	16.0	2.6	16.3	2.6	-0.5	0.662
BMI	14.7	1.3	20.4	2.5	-12.0	<0.001
BMI-SDS	-2.1	0.6	0.0	0.8	-11.7	<0.001
IQ	111.9	11.1	110.9	10.0	0.4	0.673
Handedness	0.5	2.0	1.7	3.7	-1.8	0.081
<b>Clinical variables</b>					<b>T</b>	<b>p</b>
EDI-2 total score	197.4	50.7	139.6	28.0	5.9	<0.001
EDI-2 perfectionism	19.6	6.0	15.7	4.2	3.3	0.002
BDI-II total score	19.5	11.6	5.5	5.7	6.5	<0.001
BIS	22.0	3.7	20.8	3.3	1.12	0.269
BAS	39.8	6.3	40.5	4.2	-0.44	0.665
JTCI harm avoidance	37.3	11.5	34.1	8.0	1.36	0.178
SCL-90-R	74.9	59.8	28.6	26.8	17.4	<0.001

AN=anorexia nervosa patients; HC=healthy controls; BMI-SDS=body mass index standard deviation score; IQ=intelligence quotient; EDI-2=Eating disorder inventory; BDI-II=Beck Depression Inventory; SCL-90-R = revised Symptom Checklist 90, BIS-BAS= behavioral avoidance/inhibition (BIS/BAS) scales, computed on a sample of 19 AN and 21 HC, JTCI=Junior Temperament und Character Inventory values, computed on a sample of 34 AN and

35 HC. 32 patients were of restrictive subtype and 3 of binge-purge. *P*-values below 0.05 indicates a significant group difference.

**Table 2. ANOVA on trial independent parameters.** The individual parameters from the HGF perceptual model and softmax observational model were subjected to an ANOVA with group as independent factor. Group means and standard deviations (SD) are given. For the *tonic log-volatility* ( $\omega$ ), a Mann-Whitney test found no group differences ( $U=612.5$ ,  $p(2\text{-tailed})=0.089$ ).

	AN		HC		test statistics	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Group	
<b>Behavioral measures</b>					<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
Correct answers	81.3	6.1	82.1	8.0	0.18	.675
Contingency reversal	9.2	1.4	8.7	1.9	1.27	.264
<b>Perceptual model parameters</b>					<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
<i>tonic log-volatility</i> [ $\omega$ ]	-1.15	.59	-1.62	1.54	2.86	.095
Log <i>meta-volatility</i> [ $\log(\theta)$ ]	-5.87	1.38	-6.01	.64	.313	.578
<b>Observational model parameter</b>					<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
Log <i>decision-noise</i> [ $-\log(\beta)$ ]	-1.33	.53	-1.39	.59	.197	.659
<b>Quality of Fit</b>					<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
Log Model Evidence	-52.2	14.2	-52.9	15.5	.036	.850

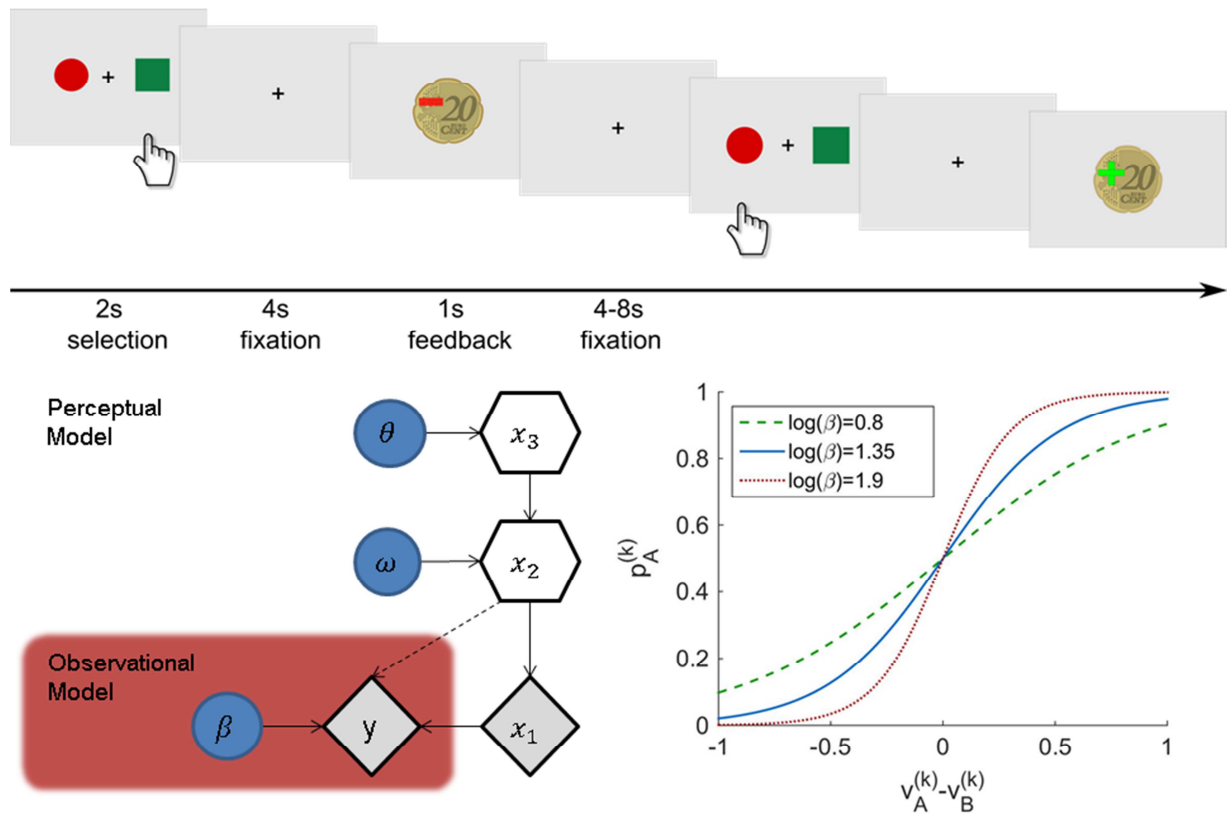
AN=anorexia nervosa patients; HC=healthy controls; *P*-values below 0.05 indicate a significant group difference. See Figure S1 for more details on performance parameters.

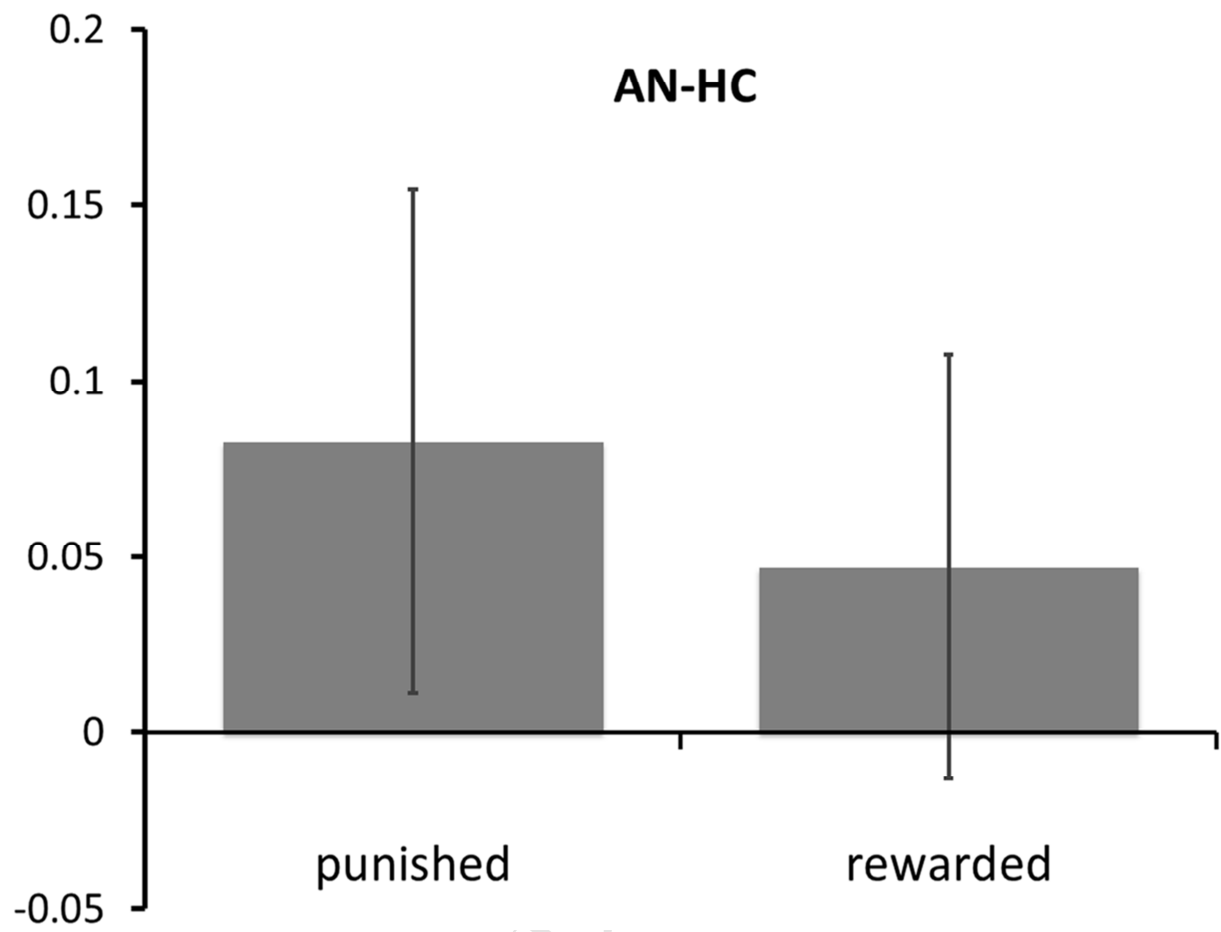
**Table 3. Mixed factor ANOVA on trial dependent parameters.** The individual trial dependent parameters from the HGF perceptual model and the reaction times were subjected to a 2×2×2 ANOVA after a logit and log transformation respectively (see Supplemental Methods) with group, response and feedback as factors. We provide F and p values for the main effects and interactions. Reaction times did not differ between the groups, but there was a main effect of response. The post hoc test revealed that reaction time was longer on those trials where a wrong answer was given.

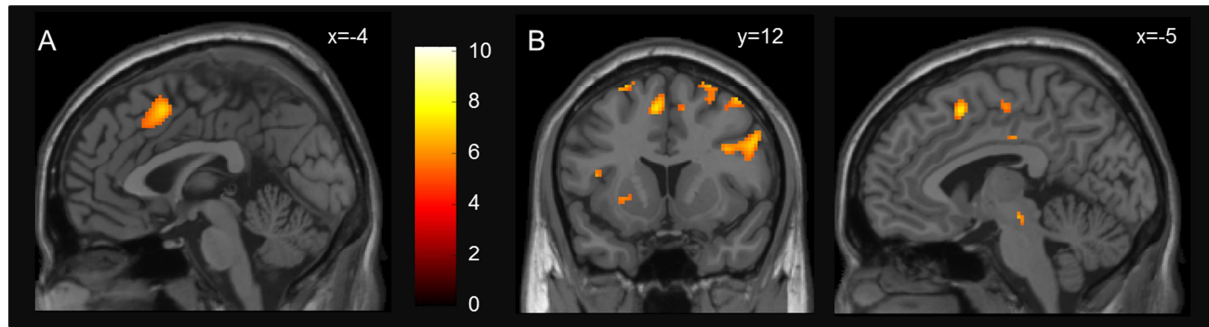
Effect	learning rate			prediction error		
	df	F	p	df	F	p
response	1,8264	24.4	<.001	1,8275	823	<.001
feedback	1,8263	692.5	<.001	1,8260	13419	<.001
group	1,69.3	3.8	.055	1,83.7	.827	.366
response×feedback	1,8263	265.1	<.001	1,8260	21.4	<.001
feedback×group	1,8263	6.6	.010	1,8260	1.64	.200
response×group	1,8264	.02	.891	1,8275	.002	.964
response×feedback×group	1,8263	.46	.498	1,8260	1.925	.165

Effect	expected value			reaction times		
	df	F	p	df	F	p
response	1,8282	927	<.001	1,8274	9.99	.002
feedback	1,8272	10.7	.001	1,8270	1.06	.303
group	1,77.6	.926	.339	1,71.6	.425	.517
response×feedback	1,8273	.002	.962	1,8270	.052	.819
feedback×group	1,8272	.051	.822	1,8270	.139	.709
response×group	1,8282	.841	.359	1,8274	.577	.448
response×feedback×group	1,8273	1.35	.246	1,8270	.821	.365









# Altered Medial Frontal Feedback Learning Signals in Anorexia Nervosa

## *Supplemental Information*

### Supplemental Methods

#### *Participants*

AN participants were recruited from specialized eating disorder programs of a university child and adolescent psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine department. Since nutritional rehabilitation has to be carried out with caution at the beginning of the treatment due to possible complications such as refeeding syndrome (1, 2), our patients had at that stage of treatment a calorie intake of about 1000 to 1500 kcal per day.

Body mass index (BMI) cut-offs for AN patients were defined according to Kromeyer-Hauschild et al. (3) and Hebebrand et al. (4). AN participants had to have a BMI below the 10<sup>th</sup> age percentile (if younger than 15.5 years) or a BMI below 17.5 kg/m<sup>2</sup> (if older than 15.5 years) and no recent weight gain.

HCs were recruited through advertisement among middle school, high school, and university students. For case-control age-matching an implementation of the Munkres algorithm was used (5).

HC participants were excluded (before scanning) if they had any history of psychiatric illness, a lifetime BMI below the 10<sup>th</sup> age percentile (if younger than 18 years)/BMI below 18.5kg/m<sup>2</sup> (if older than 18 years), or were currently obese (BMI over 97<sup>th</sup> age percentile if younger than 18 years; BMI over 30kg/m<sup>2</sup> if older than 18 years). HC participants had to be eumenorrhoeic.

Participants of all study groups were excluded if they had a lifetime history of any of the following clinical diagnoses: organic brain syndrome, schizophrenia, substance dependence, psychosis NOS, bipolar disorder, bulimia nervosa, or binge-eating disorder (or "regular" binge eating - defined as bingeing at least once weekly for 3 or more consecutive months). Further exclusion criteria for all participants were IQ lower than 85; psychotropic medications within 4 weeks prior to the study, current inflammatory, neurologic or metabolic illness; chronic medical or neurological illness that could affect appetite, eating behavior, or body weight (e.g. diabetes); clinical relevant anemia; pregnancy; breast feeding.

The magnitude of our samples was based on a similar study (6) that found a moderately large effect size ( $d=.6$ ) comparing means of model parameters between groups using a t-test. A power

analysis using Gpower (7) indicated that a sample of 36 people in each group would be needed to detect such effects with 80% statistical power at a confidence level of  $1-\alpha = .95$ .

### ***Psychiatric and Psychological Assessments***

Exclusion criteria and possible confounding variables, e.g. the use of psychotropic medications and medical comorbidities, were obtained using the expert version of the Structured interview for anorexia and bulimia nervosa for DSM-IV [SIAB-EX (8)] and our own semi-structured interview. SIAB-EX is a well-validated 87-item semi-standardized interview that assesses the prevalence and severity of specific eating-related psychopathology over the past three months. The interview provides diagnoses according to the ICD-10 and DSM-IV and is suitable for adolescents as well as adults. It has been used widely in eating disorder research (9–11). A good inter-rater reliability ( $k=.81$ ) for the diagnostic interview has been demonstrated (12). Interviews were conducted by clinically experienced and trained research assistants under the supervision of the attending child and adolescent psychiatrist. The SIAB-EX interview was also used to determine the AN subtype, resulting in 32 patients being used in the final analysis to be of restrictive type (AN-r) and 3 of binge-purge type.

To complement the information obtained with the clinical interviews, eating disorder-specific psychopathology was assessed with the German version of the Eating Disorders Inventory [EDI-2 (13)]. Depressive symptoms were explored using the German version of the Beck Depression Inventory [BDI-II (14)]. For personality and character traits such as punishment sensitivity we used the German version of the BIS-BAS scales (15) and an adaptation of the original Temperament and Character inventory questionnaire for adolescents [JTCI (16)]. All other symptoms were gauged using the revised Symptom Checklist 90 [SCL-90-R (17)].

For AN patients, comorbid psychiatric diagnoses other than eating disorders were derived from medical records and confirmed by an expert clinician with over 10 years of experience after careful chart review (including consideration of medical and psychiatric history, physical examination, routine blood tests, urine analysis, and a range of psychiatric screening instruments). All diagnostic information was ascertained at the time of treatment and the principal investigator of this study is also the chief consultant of the eating disorder treatment center.

Psychiatric conditions in potential HC were ascertained using the same instruments as in patients. If there were any indications of psychiatric symptoms each case was discussed with a board-certified expert clinician and assessments were extended if necessary.

The BMI standard deviation score (BMI-SDS), that provides an index of weight to height ratio that is corrected for age and gender, was computed according to Hemmelmann et al. (18) and Kromeyer-Hauschild et al. (3).

Intelligence quotient (IQ) was measured with a short version of the German adaptation of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale [WIE (19)] for participants aged  $\geq 16$  years or a short version of the German adaptation of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children [HAWIK (20)] for participants aged  $< 16$  years. This version of the HAWIK (21) included the following subtests: vocabulary, letter number sequencing, matrix reasoning, and symbol search. The short version of the WIE (19, 22) included the subtests: picture completion, digit symbol coding, similarities and arithmetics.

Handedness was assessed using a short version of the Annett Scale of Hand Preference (23) as previously implemented in (24). This questionnaire asks for handedness in typical daily life situations as writing or brushing teeth. Response categories range from 0 'right hand', 1 'both hands' to 2 'left hand'. A mean score for handedness was calculated.

Study data were collected and managed using secure, web-based electronic data capture tools REDCap [Research Electronic Data Capture (25)].

### ***Experimental Paradigm & Data Quality***

In each trial of the task, a coloured circle and a coloured square were presented on the left and right side of a screen (spatial position randomized). Subjects were asked to choose one of the two symbols by pressing the left or right button as soon as they had decided. Trials were considered valid if the answer was given within 2 seconds after stimulus presentation. Implicitly, one symbol was designated as the 'correct' and the other one as 'wrong'. The choice of the 'correct' symbol led to a monetary reward (+20 cents) with a probability of 80% and to a punishment (-20 cents) in 20% of the cases (probabilistic errors). The choice of the 'wrong' symbol led to punishment and reward with inverted probability (-20 cents with 80% probability and +20 cents with 20% probability). Consequently, choosing the correct symbol led to accumulating monetary gain, whereas choosing the wrong symbol led to a cumulative monetary loss. With a probability of 25% the contingency reversed (change of the 'correct' symbol to the previously 'wrong' symbol) after at least four consecutive correct decisions since the last contingency switch, requiring a behavioural adaptation in the following trials. The total win was paid at the end of the session. The task performed in the scanner consisted of 120 trials (total duration of ca. 26 minutes).

Before entering the scanner, participants performed a training session of a simplified version of the task described above in which reward contingencies did not reverse. The practice session was completed after 8 consecutive choices of the 'correct' symbol or a maximum of 30 trials.

To prevent confusion, instructions were displayed again (after training) right before the scanner task started and participants were informed that the paradigm had been changed in a subtle way, and in particular that what was designated as the ‘correct’ option might change during the course of the experiment. Participants were instructed to maximize their gain and were informed that they will receive their total monetary reward immediately after completing the experiments, in addition to a fixed monetary compensation.

In the scanner, all stimuli were presented via a head-coil-mounted display system based on LCD technology (NordicNeuroLab AS, Bergen, Norway). Participants responded with two LUMItouch keypads (Lightwave Medical Industries, Vancouver, Canada). Stimuli were presented using Presentation® software (v11.1, Neurobehavioral Systems, Berkeley, CA, USA).

To ensure data quality, we verified that no participant had a hit ratio (number of decisions for the ‘right’ figure divided by total number of trials) below or equal to 50% (performance below chance). One participant from the AN group (and her age-matched HC counterpart) was excluded for excessively poor performance (< 5 successful switches, Figure S1).

### **Computational Model**

In this experiment participants had to make optimal decisions in an uncertain and changing environment, based on a series of inputs (feedback associated to option A and B). In the approach proposed by Daunizeau (26) the decision process at each trial  $k$  is modeled in two phases.

A so-called ‘perceptual model’, describes how the participant infers about the hidden “*state of affairs*” from the feedback associated to each option, specifically how she guesses the expected values  $v_A^{(k)}$  and  $v_B^{(k)}$  from choosing option A and B, or just the inferred probability of reward, given that the amount of money won or lost remains constant over trials. To describe this phase, three models were compared, specified below.

Subsequently, taking into account the inferred hidden states, the participant had to take action. This process is described by a so called ‘observational-model’, chosen to be a softmax function  $s$ , according to which option A at trial  $k$  is chosen with a probability:

$$p_A^{(k)} = s\left(\beta(v_A^{(k)} - v_B^{(k)})\right), \quad s(x) = \frac{1}{1 + \exp(-x)}$$

(and  $p_B^{(k)} = 1 - p_A^{(k)}$ ) where  $\beta$ , the slope of the sigmoid curve at  $v_A^{(k)} = v_B^{(k)}$ , is the inverse of the subject-specific *decision noise*.

### *Hierarchical Gaussian Filter*

While we refer to (27) for a detailed description of the HGF in a general form and its inversion (i.e. the derivation of the update equations describing the evolution of the trialwise expected values  $v_A^{(k)}$ ,  $v_B^{(k)}$ , prediction errors  $\delta^{(k)}$  and learning rate  $\alpha^{(k)}$ ), we aim here to describe the specific HGF used in this study and to introduce and interpret the subject-specific parameters that couple the different levels of the hierarchy and determine the individual learning process.

#### *The generative model*

We used the HGF model introduced in the original work (27) and characterized by the presence of three levels and binary input (Figure 1). The hidden states (levels 2 and 3) are assumed to evolve as a Gaussian random walk, such that its variance depends on the state at the next higher level.

The environmental state at trial  $k$  is represented by the variable  $x_1^{(k)} \in \{0,1\}$ , while the levels 2 and 3 are represented by  $x_2^{(k)}, x_3^{(k)}$  respectively. Given our assumption of no perceptual uncertainty, knowledge of  $x_1^{(k)}$  would allow for an accurate prediction of the feedback received at trial  $k$ ,  $u^{(k)}$ . Specifically it holds  $u^{(k)} = x_1^{(k)}$ . We make  $u^{(k)} = 1$  and  $u^{(k)} = 0$  correspond to reward and punishment, respectively. The probability distribution for  $x_1$  is determined by the next higher level,  $x_2 \in \{-\infty, +\infty\}$ . Namely, we make  $x_2 = 0$  correspond to the equiprobability of being rewarded or punished. When  $x_2 \rightarrow \infty$  the probability of a reward approaches 1, conversely the probability of a punishment approaches 1 when  $x_2 \rightarrow -\infty$ . In the model used, this was achieved by means of the Bernoulli distribution:

$$p(x_1|x_2) = s(x_2)^{x_1} (1 - s(x_2))^{1-x_1} = \text{Bernoulli}(x_1; s(x_2)).$$

The value of  $x_2$  at trial  $k$  is normally distributed around the value at trial  $k - 1$ , with a variance depending on the highest level (for this model), the state  $x_3$ :

$$p(x_2^{(k)} | x_2^{(k-1)}, x_3^{(k)}) = N(x_2^{(k)}; x_2^{(k-1)}, \exp(\kappa x_3^{(k)} + \omega)).$$

The log-volatility  $\kappa x_3^{(k)} + \omega$  depends on two subject-specific parameters  $\kappa$  and  $\omega$ , that allow for individualized Bayesian learning. Since the ‘observational model’ chosen does not depend on  $x_3$ ,  $\kappa$  can be set to 1 with no loss of generality.  $\omega$  is a *tonic log-volatility*, that, if low, typically induces a low learning rate. The *meta-volatility* (volatility of  $x_3$ ) was set to a constant  $\theta$ , which again was allowed to vary between agents.

At this point, given the priors on the initial state, which were set to be delta-functions:

$$p(x_2^{(0)}, x_3^{(0)}) = \delta(x_2^{(0)}) \delta(x_3^{(0)} - 1),$$

the generative model was defined for all times  $k$  by recursion to  $k = 1$ . Indeed, for any prior on the parameters  $p(\kappa, \omega, \theta)$ , we can compute the distribution probabilities for  $x_1, x_2$  and  $x_3$ .

### *Model inversion and emerging reinforcement learning structure*

Inverting the model means to compute the probability:

$$p(x^{(k)}, \chi | u^{(1...k)})$$

where  $x^{(k)} = \{x_1^{(k)}, x_2^{(k)}, x_3^{(k)}\}$ ,  $\chi = \{\kappa, \omega, \theta\}$  and  $u^{(1...k)}$  indicates the inputs received from the beginning till trial  $k$ . It has been shown that (27), applying a chain of plausible approximations (free energy, mean-field, fixed simplified form for the marginals  $q(x_i^{(k)})$ , which are required to be fully characterized by mean and variance only, and a quadratic non-Laplacian approximation to the variational energies), at any level of the hierarchy  $i$  the update of the belief on trial  $k$  (i.e., posterior mean  $\mu_i^{(k)}$  of the state  $x_i^{(k)}$ ) is proportional to a precision-weighted prediction error:

$$prediction(k) = prediction(k-1) + learning\ rate(k) \times prediction\ error(k).$$

This equation has the same structure of update equations from Reinforcement Learning models, however with a time-varying learning rate such that the impact of the prediction errors is modulated by the environmental volatility and the certainty of beliefs, resulting in a bigger impact of prediction errors in more uncertain trials. In this work we focused on the implied learning rate  $\alpha^{(k)}$  and prediction error  $\delta^{(k)}$  at 1<sup>st</sup> level:

$$\delta^{(k)} = u^{(k)} - \hat{\mu}_1^{(k)}$$

$$\alpha^{(k)} = \frac{\hat{\mu}_1^{(k)} - \hat{\mu}_1^{(k-1)}}{\delta^{(k)}},$$

where hatted quantities represent predicted values, i.e. before associated feedback was shown. The predicted expectation values at 1<sup>st</sup> level  $\hat{\mu}_1^{(k)}$  are used as input for the observational model. In particular, to predict the choice of the participant at trial  $k$ , the difference in the expected values  $v_A^{(k)} - v_B^{(k)}$  is required (see Figure 1 in the manuscript). If option A is chosen,  $v_A^{(k)} = \hat{\mu}_1^{(k)}$  and, since  $v_B^{(k)} = 1 - v_A^{(k)}$ :

$$v_A^{(k)} - v_B^{(k)} = 2\hat{\mu}_1^{(k)} - 1.$$

Similarly,  $v_A^{(k)} - v_B^{(k)} = 1 - 2\hat{\mu}_1^{(k)}$  if option B is chosen at trial  $k$ .

To conclude, the free parameters of the models were set to have priors:

$$p(\omega) = N(\omega; -3, 4) \quad p(\log(\theta)) = N(\log(\theta); -6, 4)$$

$$p(\log(\beta)) = N(\log(\beta); 0, \sqrt{5}).$$

For the implementation and inversion of the above model we used the HGF toolbox (v4.10; <http://www.translationalneuromodeling.org/tapas/>), selecting the Broyden, Fletcher, Goldfarb and Shanno (BFGS) quasi-Newton optimization algorithm with the prior means as initialization parameters.

### *Rescorla Wagner Models*

Further 'perceptual models' considered in this study are a traditional RW model (28) with a constant learning rate and a reinforcement learning model with an adaptive learning rate (29), that grows in correspondence with switches in reward contingencies. Also these perceptual models were combined with the softmax 'observational model' described above.

The evolution of the learning rate  $\alpha^{(k)}$  in the model with an adaptive learning rate is described by the following equations:

$$\delta_{abs}^{(k)} = \delta_{abs}^{(k-1)} * (1 - \alpha^{(k)}) + |\delta^{(k)}| * \alpha^{(1)}$$

$$m^{(k)} = \frac{2 * (\delta_{abs}^{(k)} - \delta_{abs}^{(k-1)})}{\delta_{abs}^{(k)} + \delta_{abs}^{(k-1)}}$$

$$f(m^{(k)}) = \text{sign}(m^{(k)}) * \left(1 - \exp\left(-\frac{m^{(k)}}{\gamma^2}\right)\right)$$

$$\alpha^{(k+1)} = \begin{cases} \alpha^{(k)} + f(m^{(k)}) * (1 - \alpha^{(k)}) & \text{if } m^{(k)} > 0 \\ \alpha^{(k)} + f(m^{(k)}) * (\alpha^{(k)}) & \text{if } m^{(k)} < 0 \end{cases}$$

where the parameter  $\gamma$  modulates the oscillations of the learning rate, playing a role similar to  $\theta, \omega$  in the HGF model. For further details, we refer to (29). We set the priors for the free parameters of the model as follows:

$$p(\text{logit}(\alpha^{(1)}, 1)) = N(\text{logit}(\alpha^{(1)}, 1); \text{logit}(0.5, 1), \sqrt{10})$$

$$p(\text{logit}(\gamma, 10)) = N(\gamma; \text{logit}(1, 10), \sqrt{10})$$

$$p(\log(\beta)) = N(\log(\beta); 0, \sqrt{5}) \quad \text{logit}(x, a) = \log\left(\frac{x}{a-x}\right)$$

where  $\beta$  is the inverse of the decision noise like above.

We choose again the BFGS as optimization algorithm, after having determined the initial parameters through a grid search for the maximum likelihood on:

$$0.1 < \alpha^{(1)} < 0.9; 0.3 < \gamma < 4; -1 < \log(\beta) < 2.$$

### **Model Comparison**

The TAPAS software searches for the best fitting parameters by maximizing an approximation to the log model evidence (LME), namely the negative variational free energy under the Laplace assumption. The resulting LME values were subjected to a random-effects Bayesian model selection procedure [spm\_BMS function included in SPM12 (30)] to determine Expected Posterior Probabilities (PP) and Protected Exceedance Probabilities (PXP) for each model (31). PXPs represent our belief that a particular model is more likely than any other model in the comparison set, without relying on the assumption that the frequencies of each model differ. After running BMS initially across all participants, this was then done separately for controls and patients, to account for the possibility that the groups differ with regard to which model fits their behavior best.

### **Behavioral Analysis**

The normality distribution of all trial independent parameters was assessed through a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. All the parameters were subjected to a standard ANOVA. There was one parameter ( $\omega$ ) that revealed significant deviations from normality (at  $p < .05$ ) and was therefore also subjected to a non-parametric Mann-Whitney U-test.

After applying a logit transformation, the trial dependent parameters were subjected to a full-factorial  $2 \times 2 \times 2$  linear mixed model with subjects as random effects and an autocorrelation structure of order 1 (AR1), group as between subject factor and feedback and response as within subject factor. A logit transformation maps a parameter  $p$  belonging to an interval  $p \in (a, b)$  to the real axis, therefore reducing violations to the normality of distribution due to the presence of the interval bounds. Specifically, the logit transformation is the inverse of the softmax function:

$$\tilde{p} = \text{logit}(p) = \log\left(\frac{p-a}{b-p}\right).$$

The restricted maximum-likelihood approach (REML) was used to estimate the model free parameters. The residual plots did not present obvious violations of normality or homoscedasticity.



When an interaction was found to be significant, post hoc t-tests were performed, using a Bonferroni correction to take into account the multiplicity of the comparisons.

Subsequently, given the findings of (6) that adults behave differently from adolescents in a task similar to ours, we supplemented our analysis by also considering extensions of the models above that included age as a covariate and all the interactions of age with the between and within subject factors.

### ***MRI Data Acquisition***

Structural and functional images were acquired between 8 and 9 am in the morning after an overnight fast using standard sequences with a 3 T whole-body MRI scanner (TRIO; Siemens, Erlangen, Germany) equipped with a standard head coil.

The T1-weighted structural brain scans were acquired with rapid acquisition gradient echo (MP-RAGE) sequence with the following parameters: number of slices=176; repetition time=1900ms; echo time=2.26ms; flip angle (FA) of 9°; slice thickness of 1 mm; voxel size of 1 x 1 x 1mm<sup>3</sup>; field-of-view (FoV) of 256 x 224mm<sup>2</sup>; bandwidth of 200 Hz/pixel.

The functional images were acquired by using a gradient-echo T2\*-weighted echo planar imaging (EPI) with the following parameters: tilted 30° towards AC–PC line (to reduce signal dropout in orbitofrontal regions); number of volumes=656; number of slices=42; repetition time=2410ms; echo time=25ms; FA of 80°; 3mm in-plane resolution; slice thickness of 2 mm (1mm gap resulting in a voxel size of 3 x 3 x 2mm<sup>3</sup>); FoV of 192 x 192 mm<sup>2</sup>; bandwidth of 2112 Hz/pixel.

### ***MRI Data Preprocessing & Quality Control***

For fMRI preprocessing and analysis, we used SPM8 (<http://www.fil.ion.ucl.ac.uk/spm/>) unless otherwise specified. The functional images were corrected for temporal slice-timing and motion simultaneously using realign4D (32). The six realignment parameters, describing the rigid-body movement (x, y, z, pitch, roll, yaw), were saved and later used as nuisance covariates to account for the variance due to motion. The EPI volumes were coregistered to the subject's structural brain image. Then, to reduce noise due to physiological fluctuations and other sources, including motion not accounted for by realign4D, we extracted the six principal components of noise as computed from the CSF and white matter mask using the CompCor method (33) with anatomically defined ROI. This required the accurate specification of noise ROIs, in which the time series data are unlikely to be modulated by neural activity. To this end we segmented the structural images into partial volume maps of cerebral spinal fluid (CSF), white matter (WM), and gray matter (GM). Erosion (kernel of

1x1x1mm) was applied to the binarized CSF and WM maps, to minimize partial overlapping with gray matter. Finally the merging of the eroded CSF and WM masks defined the noise ROIs that were used to detect noise fluctuations. The six noise principal (34) components were then subjected to our first level GLM as nuisance regressors. This was followed by the normalization to MNI space using the individual structural images and by means of the DARTEL template (35). The resulting data were smoothed with an isotropic 8mm FWHM Gaussian kernel.

We evaluated the quality of the fMRI data by manual inspection and using artifact detection tools (ART, (36)). Volumes that exceeded a brightness intensity threshold of three standard deviations or a threshold of 1 mm normalized movement in any direction were classified as outliers [motion-outlier: acAN: median=2 HC: median=2; intensity-outlier: acAN: mean(std)=9.1(4.9) HC: 9.4 ±5.0]. The two groups did not differ regarding numbers of motion- and intensity-outliers [motion-outlier, Mann-Whitney U-test: 521; p=0.612; intensity-outlier, t-test: t(68)=-0.286; p=0.78].

## **MRI Data Analysis**

### *Parametric modulators in first level analysis*

In our first level analysis we implemented one GLM for each trial-dependent parameter of interest, namely the learning rate  $\alpha^{(k)}$ , the prediction error  $|\delta^{(k)}|$  separately on punished and rewarded trials and the expected value of the chosen option  $v^{(k)}$ . The trialwise prediction error on rewarded and punished trials was always positive and negative, respectively. Each parametric modulator was associated with an event lasting for 1 second: starting at feedback for  $\alpha^{(k)}$  and  $\delta^{(k)}$  and 1 second before button press for  $v^{(k)}$  and mean subtracted to achieve zero mean. Specifically, starting from the mean subtracted parameter  $x$ , we built the parametric modulator to be used in the imaging analysis  $p$  as:

$$p = \frac{x}{\max(|x|)}$$

such that  $p \in [-1,1]$ .

### *ROI analysis*

As part of a more exploratory approach, we also used small volume corrections as implemented in SPM in three a priori defined ROIs (see above and Figure S1) corresponding to the ventromedial prefrontal cortex (vmPFC,  $v_{A,B}^{(k)}$ ), ventral striatum (VS,  $\delta^{(k)}$ ), and posterior Medial Frontal Cortex (pmFC,  $\alpha^{(k)}$ ). In this respect, the mask of the VS was specified by binarizing a probabilistic map (37) with a threshold value of 0.4. The vmPFC mask was created by merging the left

and right frontal medial orbital cortex and rectus label from the Automated Anatomical Labelling (AAL) atlas provided in the Wake Forest University (WFU) PickAtlas for SPM (38, 39). To create the mask of the pMFC, first the Neurosynth forward inference map for the term 'learning' [[www.neurosynth.org](http://www.neurosynth.org); (40)] and corresponding to a threshold of estimated  $FDR < .01$  is eroded and subsequently dilated with a sphere kernel (radius 5mm) using *fslmaths* (41), to obtain a smooth volume. Subsequently, this image is intersected with the union of the left and right hemisphere regions of the AAL Atlas corresponding to the labels: anterior- and mid-cingulum cortex, supplementary motor area and frontal superior medial cortex. The resulting volume located along the medial wall corresponds well with the meta-analytic data on cognitive control from Ridderinkhof *et al.* (2004) and Shackman *et al.* (2011).

## Supplemental Results

### *Sample Characteristics*

The sample used in this study showed no significant differences with respect to the control group for the BIS and the harm avoidance scales respectively in the BIS-BAS and the JTCl questionnaires, in contrast to previous studies, documenting increased harm avoidance and BIS in AN (42, 43). To investigate whether this discrepancy was due to insufficient statistical power, we considered a larger sample of AN patients and healthy controls satisfying the same inclusion and exclusion criteria described in section SM 1.1 and HA, and for whom the results of the JTCl [ $n(\text{AN}) = 172$ ,  $n(\text{HC}) = 207$ ] and BIS-BAS [ $n(\text{AN}) = 136$ ,  $n(\text{HC}) = 178$ ] questionnaires but no imaging data were available. This analysis is summarized in Table S2 and indicate that indeed both the harm avoidance and the BIS scales were increased in AN.

### *Model Comparison*

Bayesian Model Selection across controls and AN patients, as well as for both groups separately revealed that the HGF fitted behavior best in both groups (see Table S1). Therefore the resulting trialwise learning rate  $\alpha^{(k)}$ , prediction error  $\delta^{(k)}$  and expected value  $v^{(k)}$  were used as parametric modulators in the fMRI analysis.

### *Behavioral Analyses*

A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test revealed significant deviations from normality for the *tonic log-volatility* ( $\omega$ ) on the HC sample ( $p(\text{HC})=0.0105$ ,  $p(\text{AN})=0.0529$ ), but no significant deviation for the other trial independent parameters. The results of the ANOVAs and of the Mann-Whitney test were reported in Table 2 of the manuscript and revealed no significant group difference for any of the parameters. We summarize in Table S2 the results of the ANOVA including age as a covariate. Even in this case no group differences are found. However, similarly to Javadi et al. (6), the rate of correct answers, reversals, the LME and  $\log(\beta)$  increased with age.

The results of the all factorial mixed models for the time dependent HGF parameters are reported in Table 3 of the main article. For the learning rate main effects of response and feedback were significant [response  $F(1,8264.1) = 24.4$ ,  $p<.001$ ; feedback  $F(1,8262.6) = 692.5$ ,  $p<.001$ ], and post hoc t-tests indicated that the learning rate was higher on trials when a wrong response was given [wrong mean(SE)=0.353(0.017), right=0.330(0.017)], and on punished trials [punished=0.408(0.018), rewarded=0.281(0.015)]. Interaction of response and feedback was found to

be significant [ $F(1,8262.7) = 265.1, p < .001$ ] and post-hoc t-tests revealed that the learning rate was the highest in punished trials after a correct response ( $0.438(0.019)$ ), followed by punished after wrong ( $0.379(0.018)$ ) rewarded after wrong ( $0.329(0.018)$ ) and rewarded after right ( $0.237(0.014)$ ). Interaction of group and feedback was also significant [ $F(1,8262.6) = 6.6, p = .010$ ] and in this case post hoc t-tests revealed (see also Figure 2 in main article) that AN had a higher learning rate in punished trials [ $AN=0.450(0.026), HC=0.367(0.025)$ ].

For the prediction error main effects of feedback and response were significant [response  $F(1,8275.2) = 823, p < .001$ ; feedback  $F(1,8259.9) = 13419, p < .001$ ], showing on one hand higher and positive prediction error on rewarded trials ( $0.775(0.023)$ ) and negative prediction error on punished trials ( $-1.507(0.011)$ ), and on the other hand higher prediction error on wrong trials [wrong= $-0.225(0.028)$ , right= $-0.859(0.020)$ ]. Interaction of response and feedback was significant [ $F(1,8260.4) = 21.4, p < .001$ ] and post-hoc t-tests revealed that the prediction error was the lowest on punished trials after a correct response ( $-1.656(0.010)$ ), followed by punished after wrong ( $-1.307(0.016)$ ) rewarded after right ( $0.513(0.022)$ ) and rewarded after wrong ( $1.010(0.029)$ ).

For the expected value we found significant main effects of response [ $F(1,8282.4) = 927, p < .001$ ; right=  $0.622(0.015)$ , wrong= $0.177(0.026)$ ] and feedback ( $F(1,8272.4) = 10.7, p = .001$ ; rewarded=  $0.400(0.022)$ , punished= $0.449(0.020)$ ).

There were no group differences for the reaction times, but the main effect of response was significant [ $F(1,8272.2) = 9.99, p = .002$ ]. Post hoc tests revealed shorter reaction times on correct answers [right= $0.604(0.013)$  seconds, wrong =  $0.620(0.014)$  seconds].

The results of the mixed model with age added as a nuisance regressor are summarized in Table S3, showing that all main effects and interactions that were significant in the main model, remained significant when age was added as a covariate. Post hoc t-tests revealed that the directions of the effects also remain unaltered. For the learning rate the 3-way interaction response×feedback×age was significant [ $F(1,8256.4) = 12.8, p < .001$ ]. For the prediction error the interactions response×age and feedback×age were significant [response×age:  $F(1,8259.0) = 29.5, p < .001$ ; feedback×age:  $F(1,8251.4) = 14.7, p < .001$ ]. For the expected value the interaction response×age was significant [ $F(1,8269.7) = 33.3, p < .001$ ].

To clarify the impact of the AN subtype on our main results, of increased learning rate in AN on punished trials, we repeated our analysis only on the restrictive AN subsample, because the size of the binge-purging subtype ( $N=3$ ) is too small for statistical treatment. By reproducing the results of our original analysis (for details please see Table S5 and Figure S5 below) we argue that our results are driven by participants of the restrictive subtype and it is unclear whether they also apply to patients of the binge/purge subtype.

To explore the effect of symptoms on the learning rate, particularly on punished trials, we considered mixed models restricted to the AN group where in addition to the factors response and reward and their interaction, in turn BMI-SDS, BDI-II and EDI-2 are added as covariates together with their interaction with reward. Results for these analyses are reported in Tables S6 below.

All analyses detect the expected effects of response, reward and their interaction. Moreover, a correlation at the trend level between EDI-2 and the learning rate on punished trials was found (namely, as expected, worse symptoms are associated with higher learning rate on punished trials). This same effect was observed (and tested as nominally significant) when EDI-2 is substituted by BDI-II. Malnutrition, as assessed through BMI-SDS, seems also to be associated with learning rate on punished trials. While our findings about BDI-II and EDI-2 would not withstand a Bonferroni correction for multiple comparison, they support our main finding that learning rate on punished trials is related to typical AN symptoms. However, the detected anticorrelation between BMI-SDS and the learning rate on punished trials may suggest that learning rate on punished trials is not increased in AN as a consequence of undernutrition or driven by patients with a particularly low BMI, and motivates further analysis in recovered AN patients, for whom undernutrition is not a confounding factor. No correlation between mean punishment learning rate and HA both in the whole sample and separately in the respective participant groups was detected (Pearson's  $r(\text{AN}+\text{HC}) = -.053$ ,  $p=.668$ ;  $r(\text{AN})=-.186$ ,  $p=.292$ ;  $r(\text{HC})= -.003$ ,  $p=.988$ ).

### ***Imaging Analyses***

The three GLMs with trialwise parameters from the HGF as parametric modulators revealed expected activation patterns in line with previous studies (44–46), see Chase et al. (47) for a review. We report in Table S4 a full list of activations found in this study. Additionally, the results for the learning rate were illustrated in Figure 3 (but see also Figure S4), while the results for the prediction error, separating rewarded and punished trials, and the expected value are shown in Figure S3. No group differences in the activation patterns were significant. Furthermore to test whether the subtype of AN patients had an impact on our finding of increased pMFC activation, in a region related to the learning rate, we repeated this analysis by restricting the AN sample to patients of the restrictive subtype. Results are reported in Figure S5.

While our finding of increased pMFC BOLD activation in AN after punishment seems to be related to the finding of an increased learning rate after punishment and to the fact that activity in that area correlates with the learning rate, it does not establish any causality relation. To test whether increased activation in the pMFC as observed on punished trials in AN patients leads to an increased learning rate or vice versa, we conducted mediation analysis using the PROCESS toolbox

(48). We used the MarsBaR tool (<http://marsbar.sourceforge.net/> 48) to extract the mean activation on punished trials in two spheres (radius = 10mm) centered at the two peak coordinates in the pMFC, one located in the left and the other in the right hemisphere (see Table S6) where the difference in activation between the AN and HC group is at its maximum. The mean activation was correlated with the median learning rate on punished trials computed for each participant. Next, we employed the SPSS PROCESS toolbox with 5000 bootstrapping samples to compute 95% confidence intervals for inference about indirect effects. Since no indirect effect of group on the pMFC activation as mediated by the learning rate on punished trials or on the learning rate as mediated by the pMFC activation on punished trials was found to be significant (see Table S8 below), no causal relationship can be inferred.

## Supplemental Tables

**Table S1. Model comparison across groups and for each group separately.** Results of Bayesian Model Selection of both patients and healthy controls together as well as for both groups separately, for all the models preliminarily considered in this work: a traditional RW, a RW model with adaptive learning rate and a HGF with three levels and binary input as described above.

	AN		HC		AN&HC	
	PP	PXP	PP	PXP	PP	PXP
RW (constant learning rate)	0.082	<.001	0.066	.001	0.059	<.001
RW (adaptive learning rate)	0.098	<.001	0.243	.002	0.152	<.001
HGF	0.820	>.999	0.691	.997	0.799	>.999

PXP=Protected Exceedance Probability, PP=posterior probability.

**Table S2. Harm avoidance (JTCl) and inhibition (BIS-BAS) on a larger sample.** Independent sample t-test results as computed on a larger sample than the one included in this study.

	AN			HC			Test statistics		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	Dof	T	p
BIS	136	22.4	3.5	178	19.6	3.3	312	7.265	<.001
JTCl harm avoidance	172	38.2	9.5	207	33.4	8.8	377	5.075	<.001



**Table S3. ANOVA on trial independent parameters.** The individual parameters from the HGF perceptual model and softmax observational model were subjected to a one way ANOVA with age as a covariate. Group means and standard deviations (SD) are given.

	AN		HC		test statistics	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	group	
<b>Behavioral measures</b>					<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
Correct answers	81.7	5.9	82.7	7.9	0.39	.536
Contingency reversal	9.2	1.4	8.8	1.9	1.33	.253
<b>Perceptual model parameters</b>					<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
<i>tonic log-volatility</i> [ $\omega$ ]	-1.15	.59	-1.62	1.54	2.86	.095
<i>Log meta-volatility</i> [ $\log(\theta)$ ]	-5.87	1.38	-6.01	.64	.257	.614
<b>Observational model parameter</b>					<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
<i>Log decision-noise</i> [ $-\log(\beta)$ ]	-1.33	.53	-1.39	.59	.10	.75
<b>Quality of Fit</b>					<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
Log Model Evidence	-52.2	14.2	-52.9	15.6	.148	.702

AN=anorexia nervosa patients; HC=healthy controls; *P*-values below 0.05 indicates a significant group difference.

**Table S4. Mixed factor ANOVA on trial dependent parameters with age as a covariate.** The individual trial dependent parameters from the HGF perceptual model and the reaction times were subjected to a 2×2×2 full factorial mixed model with group, response and feedback as factors and age at date of scan as a covariate, after being respectively logit and log transformed (see above). We provide F and p values for the main effects and interactions of group, response and feedback only.

Effect	learning rate			prediction error		
	df	F	p	df	F	p
response	1,8258	23.2	<.001	1,8267	968	<.001
feedback	1,8257	702	<.001	1,8253	15832	<.001
group	1,67.2	3.63	.023	1,80.8	1.10	.298
response×feedback	1,8257	264	<.001	1,8254	26.4	<.001
feedback×group	1,8257	6.48	.011	1,8253	1.63	.202
response×group	1,8258	.016	.900	1,8267	.013	.909
response×feedback×group	1,8257	.245	.621	1,8254	1.41	.235

Effect	expected value			reaction times		
	df	F	p	df	F	p
response	1,8275	915	<.001	1,8267	10.4	.001
feedback	1,8266	10.2	.001	1,8264	1.15	.283
group	1,75.1	1.01	.319	1,69.5	.489	.487
response×feedback	1,8266	.044	.833	1,8264	.052	.820
feedback×group	1,8266	.072	.788	1,8264	.130	.718
response×group	1,8275	.415	.519	1,8267	.675	.411
response×feedback×group	1,8266	1.22	.270	1,8264	.713	.398

**Table S5. Mixed factor ANOVA on trial dependent learning rate for the AN restrictive subgroup (AN-r).** The individual trial dependent learning rate from the HGF perceptual model was subjected to a 2×2×2 ANOVA after a logit transformation (see above) with group, response and feedback as factors. In this supplementary analysis, AN patients not belonging to the AN-r subgroup (n=3) were excluded. We provide F and p values for the main effects and interactions. A post hoc t-test revealed that on punished trials the learning rate is greater in AN-r than in HC (mean difference(SE) = 0.088(0.036)).

Effect	learning rate		
	df	F	p
response	1,7910	25.4	<.001
feedback	1,7909	677	<.001
group	1,66.3	4.8	.033
response×feedback	1,7909	266	<.001
feedback×group	1,7909	4.3	.037
response×group	1,7910	.04	.843
response×feedback×group	1,7909	.36	.550

**Table S6. Relationships between the trial dependent learning rate in the AN group and symptom variables.** After a logit transformation (see SM above), the individual trial dependent learning rate from the HGF perceptual model was subjected to four 2×2 ANOVA with response and feedback as factors and in turn EDI-2, BDI-II and BMI-SDS as covariates, together with their interaction with the feedback factor. We provide F and p values for the main effects and interactions.

Effect	learning rate		
	df	F	p
response	1,3905	10.0	.002
feedback	1,3904	17.3	<.001
response×feedback	1,3904	117.3	<.001
EDI-2	1,31.11	0.10	.753
EDI-2×feedback	1,3904	3.86	.050

Effect	learning rate		
	df	F	p
response	1,4143	11.5	.001
feedback	1,4141	110	<.001
response×feedback	1,4141	131	<.001
BDI-II	1,33.11	0.08	.774
BDI-II×feedback	1,4141	4.07	.044

Effect	learning rate		
	df	F	p
response	1,4144	11.0	.001
feedback	1,4142	286	<.001
response×feedback	1,4141	134	<.001
BMI-SDS	1,33.2	14.9	<.001
BMI-SDS×feedback	1,4141	63.8	<.001

**Table S7.** Correlation of BOLD activity and HGF trial dependent parameters. Peaks voxels of clusters ( $k > 100$ ) where correlation between bold signal and parametric modulator is significant at FWE level. Peaks in the cerebellum were excluded. For each cluster only the global maximum is reported.

Brain region	Peak Voxel MNI Coordinates			T	Cluster Extension
	x	y	z		
	$\alpha$				
Globus Pallidus	10	0	0	7.81	231
Thalamus	8	-16	4	5.89	
Insula	34	18	6	7.18	231
pMFC	-4	14	50	7.04	474
Precuneus	8	-64	46	6.73	123
Insula	-30	16	-6	6.29	132
	$ \delta $ , rewarded trials				
superior frontal	0	34	46	9.47	1085
Insula	32	20	-6	8.25	199
middle frontal	46	14	44	7.16	414
Thalamus	10	-6	-2	6.96	254
Thalamus	-8	-6	0	6.09	
Insula	-30	18	-4	6.78	149
Parietal Inf	44	-50	46	6.74	118
	$ \delta $ , punished trials				
Precuneus	-10	-38	2	6.64	110
	-2	-44	40	6.55	437
	$\nu$				
Parahippocampal	-30	-36	-14	9.45	282
Middle Temporal	-62	-6	-18	8.42	729
vmPFC	-2	46	-10	8.00	1373
Precuneus	-10	-52	10	7.90	1545
Precuneus	8	-52	10	7.28	
...	-46	-68	28	7.07	413
	28	-26	-22	6.41	146

pMFC = posterior medial frontal cortex, vmPFC = ventromedial prefrontal cortex, VS = ventral striatum.

**Table S8. Increased BOLD activity in AN after feedback on punished trials.** Peaks voxels of clusters ( $k > 50$ ) where BOLD activation was stronger in AN than in HC after punishing stimuli was presented (at FWE level). For each of these peaks we also report the T-values for each group's activation, as computed within the  $2 \times 2$  model. Clusters in the Cerebellum were excluded.

Brain region	Peak Voxel MNI Coordinates			T			Cluster
				HC	AN	AN>HC	Extension
	x	y	z				AN>HC
	$\alpha$						
pMFC	-6	14	52	4.94	8.04	7.20	71
pMFC	6	2	64	2.30	6.78	7.39	270
Precentral	-42	-4	60	1.05	4.63	10.09	340
Occipital Mid	-32	-89	-4	5.39	8.37	12.15	1704
Occipital Inf	36	-84	-2	4.16	7.03	12.72	1313
Insula	-26	14	-2	2.40	5.82	6.91	111
Temporal Mid	40	-58	10	0.04	3.31	8.90	112
Cuneus	14	-96	14	-0.27	2.70	9.45	102
Precentral	-44	4	24	3.01	5.82	9.41	386
Frontal Mid	34	4	50	2.18	5.34	9.15	1686
Occipital	-22	-72	30	4.07	6.70	9.40	260
Angular	26	-58	44	4.21	7.25	11.27	512
Parietal Sup	-24	-58	46	4.90	7.62	8.50	171

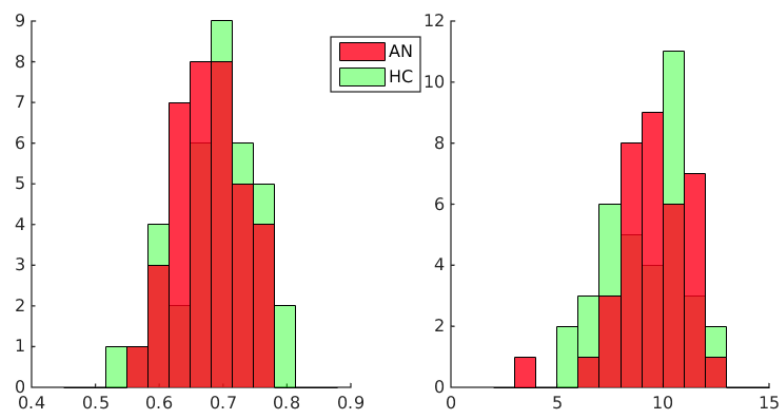
**Table S9a. Mediation analysis between brain activation in the pMFC on punished trials and diagnostic group with learning rate as a mediator.** LLCI and ULCI indicate the lower and upper level of 95% confidence intervals respectively. Both the direct effect and indirect effect refer to confidence intervals for the group effect on pMFC activation with the learning rate on punished trials included as a mediator in the model. No indirect effect was significant.

	pMFC (left hemisphere)				pMFC (right hemisphere)			
	Direct Effect		Indirect Effect		Direct Effect		Indirect Effect	
	LLCI	ULCI	LLCI	ULCI	LLCI	ULCI	LLCI	ULCI
Learning Rate	-.6171	-.0069	-.1424	.0350	-.9391	-.3195	-.0976	.0960

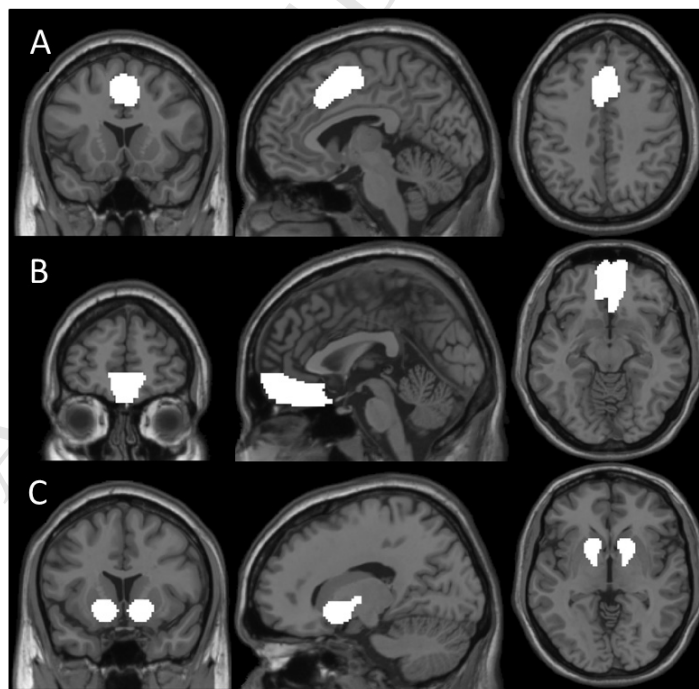
**Table S9b. Mediation analysis between learning rate on punished trials and diagnostic group with activation in the pMFC as a mediator.** LLCI and ULCI indicate the lower and upper level of 95% confidence intervals respectively. Both the direct effect and indirect effect refer to confidence intervals for the group effect on learning rate on punished trials with the pMFC activation on punished trials in the right and left hemisphere spheres included as a mediator in the model. No indirect effect was significant.

	pMFC (left hemisphere)				pMFC (right hemisphere)			
	Direct Effect		Indirect Effect		Direct Effect		Indirect Effect	
	LLCI	ULCI	LLCI	ULCI	LLCI	ULCI	LLCI	ULCI
Learning Rate	-.0533	.0057	-.0139	.0051	-.0573	.0067	-.0192	.0174

## Supplemental Figures

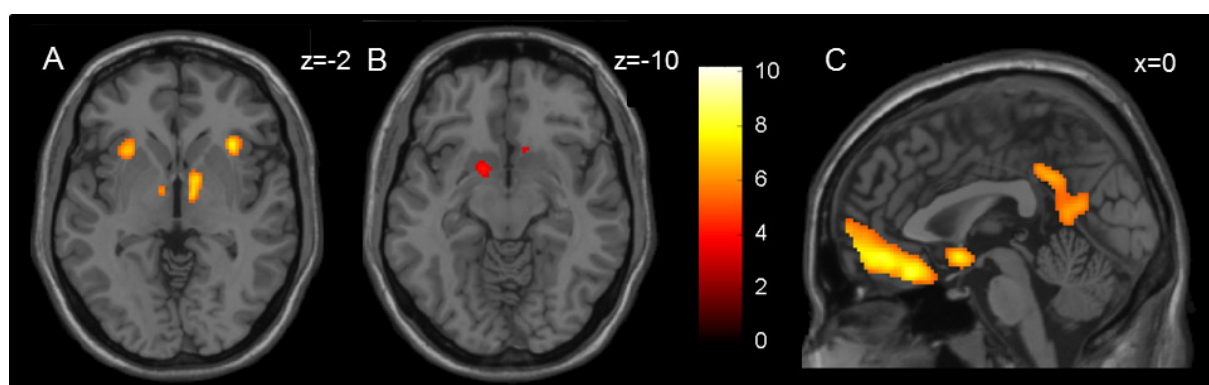


**Figure S1. Performance indicators.** Histogram for rate of correct answers (left) and number of achieved contingency switches (right) for our entire sample, before behavioral exclusion criteria were applied. The number of contingency switches was normalized to keep into account the (slightly varying) number of valid trials for each participant. The AN patient with sensibly lower achieved number of contingency switches was excluded from our final sample, together with her age-matched HC partner.

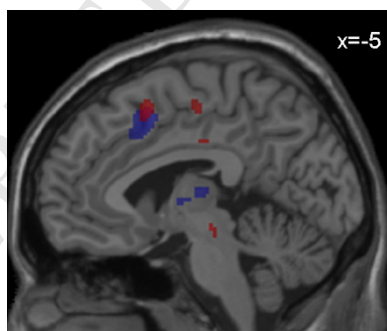


**Figure S2. Regions of interest.** (A) posterior medial frontal cortex – pmMFC, (B) ventromedial prefrontal cortex – vmPFC, (C) ventral striatum – VS.

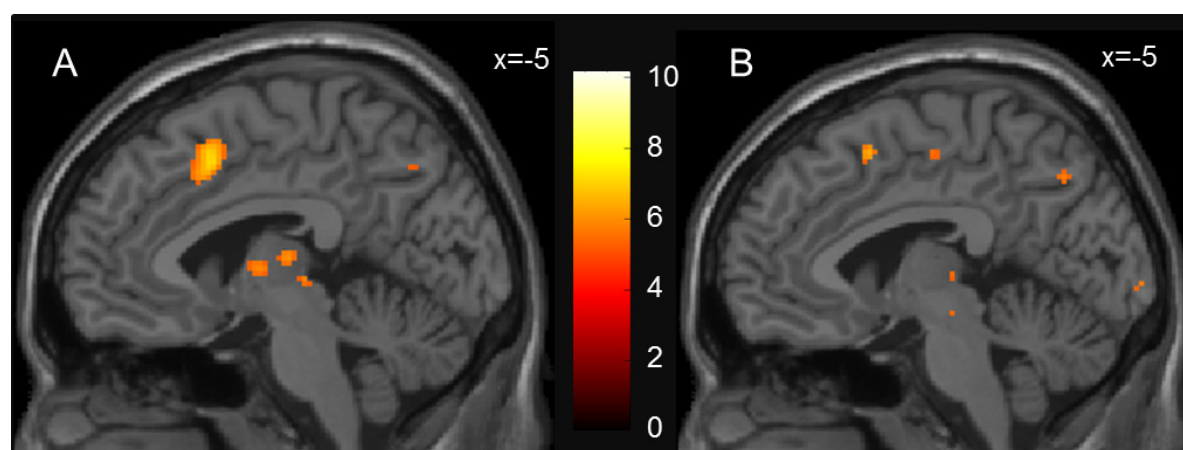




**Figure S3.** Correlation of BOLD activity with the absolute value of the prediction error  $|\delta^{(k)}|$  on punished and rewarded trials (A and B, respectively) and expected value  $v^{(k)}$  (C) as computed within a Hierarchical Gaussian Filter model. The color scale shows T-values. This correlation was significant at whole-brain FWE level for the expected value and the prediction error on rewarded trials, but only at a more lenient threshold (FWE-SVC level, namely all voxels were individually significant at the small volume corrected threshold) for the prediction error on punished trials. Therefore in (A) and (C) we display voxels where the signal was significant at FWE level (whole-brain), while in (B) we display voxels in the VS (see SM 1.9 for a definition of the VS mask) where the signal was significant at FWE-SVC level.



**Figure S4.** Overlap between the cluster in the pMFC showing a significant correlation with the learning rate in the whole-brain one-sample analysis (blue scale,  $FWE < .05$ ) and the cluster where the AN group presented increased activation after punishment (red scale, whole-brain  $FWE < .05$ ). A similar overlap of learning rate related activation and increased activation in AN also occurs in the left insula (see Tables S4, S5).



**Figure S5. A: Correlation of BOLD activity after feedback with the learning rate  $\alpha$ .** The learning rate was computed within a Hierarchical Gaussian Filter and the expected pattern of activation in the pMFC across all healthy and AN-r participants (whole-brain one-sample t-test) was reproduced. **B: Increased BOLD activity in AN-r following punishment.** Increased BOLD activity in AN-r patients relative to HC following punishment is depicted on the same slice. We display regions where the signal is significant at a FWE<.05 level determined with random field theory (whole-brain). The color scale shows one sample t-test values.

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