



Principles of TA

- Developed in 1950s by psychoanalyst Eric Berne
- verbal communication, particularly face to face, is at the centre of human social relationships
- Transaction Stimulus - when two people encounter each other, one of them will speak to the other
- Transaction Response – the reaction from the other person
- The person sending the Stimulus is called the Agent. The person who responds is called the Respondent
- Transactional Analysis became the method of examining the transaction wherein: 'I do something to you, and you do something back'

TA as a Psychological Theory

- Applied in psychotherapy, education and organisations.
- Promotes autonomy – transcending past influences, rethinking 'childhood decisions'.
- Places 'parental programming' as significant.
- Parental programming can be 'positive' and/or 'negative'.

Injunctions

Children are exposed to parental messages verbally and non-verbally – explicitly and implicitly. From these emerge ‘injunctions’. These are considered ‘negative’. They are internalised by the child as ‘prohibitions’ or ‘negative commands’. They can be given through modelling, rewarding certain behaviours or direct expression. Sometimes, they are not even given by the parent. The child creates them through mis-interpretation.

The 12 Injunctions

- **Don't be (don't exist)**: This is one of the most harmful messages. Maybe your parents did not want you in the first place. Maybe they felt your needs were too much. Comments like ‘If it weren't for you I would have a career’ or ‘I would divorce your father’ can send this message. A lot of people with suicidal tendencies or depression are complying with a ‘do not exist’ injunction.
- **Don't be who you are**: Maybe your parents wanted you to be more like them and less like you. Maybe they had different expectations about your appearance or your personality. Maybe they wanted you to be a different gender.
- **Don't be a child**: This message is usually sent to first-born children. You might have been asked to look after your siblings and be responsible. To not make mistakes or act silly. These children may feel bowed down by responsibility.

- **Don't grow up**: This message is usually directed to the youngest child in the family. It is worse when the parents do not have a strong relationship between them. They derive meaning from having a ‘baby’ to look after. You may have complied by being immature, acting out or delaying leaving the nest.
- **Don't think**: When you started questioning everything as a toddler, your parents got annoyed. They discouraged you when you had a different opinion than them.
- **Don't feel**: When you cried or were upset, your parents felt uncomfortable. They got angry with you, they shut you up or tried to distract you. They said things like: ‘Big boys don't cry’ or ‘nice girls don't get angry.’ Do you cry when you get angry? Do you get angry when really you're sad? You may have learned to substitute certain emotions with others that were more acceptable in your home. These non-authentic emotions are called ‘racket’ emotions.

- **Don't do anything:** "Don't run." "Don't climb high." "Don't get dirty." Your parents tended to do everything for you. They were too afraid for your safety. You may start things, but not finish them. You may struggle to make decisions as you think the world is a scary place.
- **Don't be well (or sane):** Your parents only paid attention to you when you were not well. They rewarded bizarre behaviour. You have learned to get attention from others by being unwell or unstable.
- **Don't be important:** You grew up hearing "Children are to be seen and not be heard" and "You should not talk at the dinner table."

- **Don't succeed:** Were your parents angry when you beat them in a game? Did they set unattainable standards, so it was impossible for you to succeed? It could be that your parents were unconsciously jealous and did not want you to surpass them.
- **Don't be close:** Your parents felt uncomfortable with intimacy. They did not show affection. They may have taught you not to trust others or not to share your life.
- **Don't belong:** Your parents judged your friends and any group you attached yourself to. You may have moved around a lot as a child.

Childhood decisions

Injunctions give rise to 'childhood decisions', e.g.:

- I won't grow up
- I won't be close
- I can't make it

Tend to be acted out in adult life but can be changed through a process of re-decision. This will occur at both cognitive and emotional levels. This leads to autonomous, self aware and flexible adults.

Drivers

Drivers underpin the behaviours we develop to adapt to our environment in light of our injunctions. They are developed at an age when we can understand what is approved of and disapproved of by the grownups around us and we attempt to adapt to them to feel ok about ourselves.

- Be Perfect
- Be Strong
- Hurry Up
- Please Others
- Try Hard

Drivers
The "Do" messages of how to please Mum and Dad



Be Perfect
"You're only OK if you get everything right."
Allowor
"It's OK to be yourself."



Please Others
"You're only OK if you please people."
Allowor
"It's OK to consider and please yourself."



Be Strong
"You're only OK if you hide your feelings and wants from people."
Allowor
"It's OK to be open and to take care of your own needs."



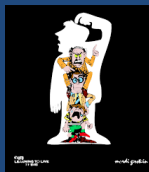
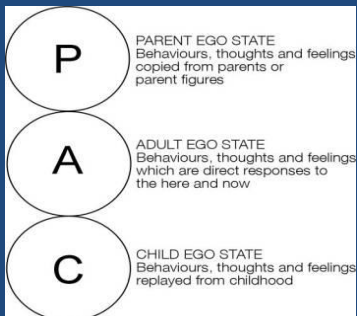
Try Hard
"You're only OK if you keep trying hard to do things."
Allowor
"It's OK to do it."



Hurry Up
"You're only OK if you do everything right now."
Allowor
"It's OK to take your time."

© 1998 by Dr. David R. Hawkins Ref: "The Drivers"

Structural Ego States



Ego States

Parent



This is our ingrained voice of authority, absorbed conditioning, learning and attitudes from when we were young. We were conditioned by our real parents, teachers, older people, next door neighbours, aunts and uncles. Our Parent is made up of a huge number of hidden and overt recorded playbacks. Typically embodied by phrases and attitudes starting with 'how to', 'under no circumstances', 'always' and 'never forget', 'don't lie, cheat, steal', etc, etc. Our parent is formed by external events and influences upon us as we grow through early childhood. We can change it, but this is easier said than done.



Adult



Our 'Adult' is our ability to think and determine action for ourselves, based on received data. The adult in us begins to form at around ten months old, and is the means by which we keep our Parent and Child under control. If we are to change our Parent or Child we must do so through our adult.

Child

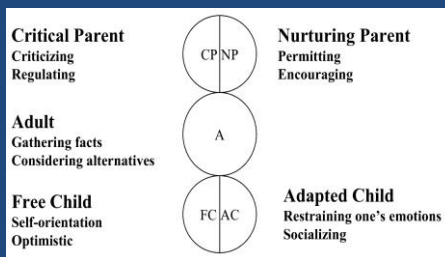


Our internal reaction and feelings to external events form the 'Child'. This is the seeing, hearing, feeling, and emotional body of data within each of us. When anger or despair dominates reason, the Child is in control. Like our Parent we can change it, but it is no easier.

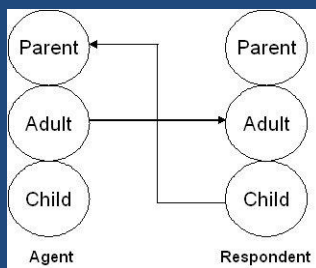
In other words:

- Parent is our 'Taught' concept of life
- Adult is our 'Thought' concept of life
- Child is our 'Felt' concept of life

Functional Ego States



Complementary transactions



Some applications of TA

- Clinical Psychology and Psychiatry
- Counselling/Psychotherapy
- Organisational development
- Management
- Any situation that involves looking at relationship dynamics

Egograms (Jack Dusay, 1970s)

- The Egogram is a bar graph showing the amount of energy within the ego structure of the person and how he will re-distribute his energy within the different egos at one given time.
- gives an evaluation of the distribution of energy in the personality, and it can be used by the individual to show how much energy is needed to be re-distributed to other parts of the personality to make positive change

Constructing your own egogram

- Draw a horizontal line on a piece of paper.
- Underneath, label the five ego states – adapted child, free child, adult, controlling parent and nurturing parent.
- Think of yourself at this particular time or at a specific moment in the past, draw whatever you feel is the most energised part of your personality, and draw it with a vertical line. (This will be your highest column.)
- Now, using your intuition, draw the lowest energised part of your personality as it is in comparison with the other. (This will be the lowest column.)
- Then fill in the other states as you see them in comparison with the above.

Ego Gram

- The idea is to draw a vertical bar above each ego state label.
- The height of the bar shows how much of the time you use that functional part.

