

However, is a
language of
emotions. effective
functioning



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

However, the utility of this concept is the principal reason why people become interested and maintain their interest in transactional analysis. Berne made complex interpersonal transactions understandable when he recognised that people can interact from one of three “ ego-states” – Parent, Adult or Child – and that these interactions can occur at overt and covert levels. Each one of the ego states is in effect a “ mind module,” a system of communication with its own language and function; the Parent’s is a language of values, the Adult’s is a language of logic and rationality and the Child’s is a language of emotions. Effective functioning in the world depends on the availability of all three, intact ego states.

Transactional Analysts are trained to recognise what ego states people are transacting from and to follow, in precise detail, the transactional sequences that people engage in as they interact with each other. With this training, they are also able to intervene effectively to improve the quality of communication and interaction for their clients. The Three Ego States: Each of our personalities is made up of various parts or ego states. These include the following: (a) Parent Ego State (“ extero Psyche”): This is a set of feelings, thinking and behaviour that we have copied from our parents and significant others. This is our ingrained voice of authority, absorbed conditioning, learning and attitudes from when we were young. We were conditioned by our parents, teachers, older people, next door neighbours, aunts and uncles.

As we grow up, we take in ideas, beliefs, feelings and behaviours from our parents and caretakers. If we live in an extended family, then we learn and take in from more people. When we do this, it is called introjecting. For

example, we may notice that we are saying things just as our father, mother, grandmother may have done, even though, consciously, we do not want to.

We do this as we have lived with this person so long that we automatically reproduce certain things that were said to us, or treat others as we might have been treated. The parent represents a massive collection of recordings in the brain of external events experienced or perceived in approximately the first five years of life. Since the majority of the external events experienced by a child are actions of the parent, the ego state is appropriately called Parent. Moreover, events perceived by the child from individuals also include those who are often in parent-like roles and are also recorded in the Parent. When Transactional Analysts refer to the Parent Ego State (as opposed to a biological or stepparent), it is capitalised. The same goes for the other two state (Adult and Child). 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. There are two forms of Parent we can play as follows: The Nurturing Parent is caring and concerned and often may appear as a mother figure (though men can play it too). They seek to keep the Child safe and offer unconditional love, calming them when they are troubled. The Controlling (or Critical) Parent, on the other hand, tries to make the Child do as the parent wants them to do, perhaps transferring values or beliefs or helping the Child to

understand and live in society. They may also have negative intent, using the Child as a whipping-boy or worse.

It is also sometimes called the Prejudiced Parent. Parent Ego State can be inferred from (i) the Physical state such as angry or impatient body language and expressions, finger-pointing, patronising gestures and (ii) the Verbal cues such as always, never, for once and for all, judgmental words, critical words, patronising language and posturing language. (b) Child Ego State (“archaeopsyché”): The Child ego state is a set of behaviours, thoughts and feelings which are replayed from our own childhood. Often, the boss calls us into his or her office; we may immediately get a churning in our stomach and wonder what wrong we have done.

If this were explored, we might remember the time the head teacher called us and scolded us. Of course, not everything in the Child ego state is negative. We might go into someone’s house, get a lovely smell and remember our grandmother’s food when we were little, and all the same, warm feelings we had at six years of age may come flooding back. Both the Parent and Child ego states are constantly being updated. For example, we may meet someone who gives us the permission we needed as a child, and did not get, to be fun and joyous. We may well use that person in our imagination when we are stressed to counteract our old ways of thinking that we must work longer and longer hours to keep up with everything.

We might ask ourselves “ I wonder what X would say now”. Then on hearing the new permissions to relax and take some time out, do just that and then return to the work renewed and ready for the challenge. Subsequently,

rather than beating up on ourselves for what we did or did not do, what tends to happen is we automatically start giving ourselves new permissions and take care of ourselves. Alternatively, we might have had a traumatic experience yesterday, which goes into the Child ego state as an old memory that hampers our growth.

Positive experiences will also go into the Child ego state as old memories. The positive experiences can then be drawn on to remind us that positive things do happen. The process of analysing personality in terms of ego states is called structural analysis.

It is important to remember that ego states do not have an existence of their own; they are concepts to enable understanding. Therefore, it is important to say " I want some fun" rather than " My Child wants some fun". We may be in our Child ego state when we say this, but saying " I" reminds us to take responsibility for our actions. In contrast to the Parent, the Child represents the recordings in the brain of internal events associated with external events the child perceives. Stated another way, stored in the Child are the emotions or feelings, which accompanied external events. Like the Parent, recordings in the Child occur from childbirth all the way up to the age of approximately 5 years old.

Examples of recordings in the Child include (i) " When I saw the monster's face, I felt really) scared" and (ii) " The clown at the birthday party was really funny 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. There are three types of Child we can play as follows: i. The Natural Child is largely un-self-aware and is characterized by the non-speech noises they make (yahoo, etc.). They like playing and are open and vulnerable.

ii. The Little Professor is the curious and exploring Child who is always trying out new stuff (often much to their Controlling Parent's annoyance). Together with the Natural Child, they make up the Free Child.

iii. The Adaptive Child reacts to the world around them, either changing themselves to fit in or rebelling against the forces they feel. The Nurturing Parent naturally talks to the Natural Child and the Controlling Parent to the Adaptive Child. In fact, these parts of our personality are evoked by the opposite. Thus if I act as an Adaptive Child, I will most likely evoke the Controlling Parent in the other person.

Child Ego State can be inferred from (i) the Physical state such as emotionally sad expressions, despair, temper tantrums, whining voice, rolling eyes, shrugging shoulders, teasing, delight, laughter, speaking behind hand, raising hand to speak, squirming and giggling and (ii) the Verbal cues such as baby talk, I wish, I don't know, I want, I'm going to, I don't care, oh no, not again, things never go right for me, worst day of my life, bigger, biggest, best, many superlatives, words to impress. (c) Adult Ego State ("neopsyche"): The Adult ego state is about direct responses to the here and now. We deal with things that are going on today in ways that are influenced by our past in a healthy manner. Adult ego state is about being spontaneous and aware with the capacity for intimacy. When in our Adult, we are able to

see people as they are, rather than what we project onto them. We ask for information rather than stay scared and rather than make assumptions. Taking the best from the past and using it appropriately in the present is an integration of the positive aspects of both our Parent and Child ego states. Therefore, this can be called the Integrating Adult integrating means that we are constantly updating ourselves through our every day experiences and using this to inform us.

In this structural model, the Integrating Adult ego state circle is placed in the middle to show how it needs to orchestrate between the Parent and the Child ego states. For example, the internal Parent ego state may beat up on the internal Child, saying, " You are no good, look at what you did wrong again, you are useless". The Child may then respond with " I am no good, look how useless I am, I never get anything right". Many people hardly hear this kind of internal dialogue as it goes on so much they might just believe life is this way.

An effective Integrating Adult ego state can intervene between the Parent and Child ego states. This might be done by stating that this kind of parenting is not helpful and asking if it is prepared to learn another way. Alternatively, the Integrating Adult ego state can just stop any negative dialogue and decide to develop another positive Parent ego state perhaps taken in from other people they have met over the years.

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 If we are to change our Parent or

Child, we must do so through our adult. Adult Ego State can be inferred from (i) the Physical state such as attentive, interested, straight-forward, tilted head, non-threatening and non-threatened and (ii) the Verbal cues such as why, what, how, who, where and when, how much, in what way, comparative expressions, reasoned statements, true, false, probably, possibly, I think, I realise, I see, I believe, in my opinion.