



Transactional Musings



The Parental ego state gives a person his personal sense of being at home with himself and provides a home for his/her family.

Third Circle / the Parent - Part 3

Third Circle -The Diagramed Parent: Eric Berne's Most Significant Contribution
by F.H. Ernst Jr., M.D.
Part 3

Honor Thy Parent

"Parent is a separate and unique set of ego states in the personality structure of the individual entity. Identifying this Parent aspect of personality has had a very real and practical set of results for many people and also allows leeway for the Child's ego state to come out and play at times. It allows the Child in the person to have his own legitimate place within his own living personality structure (See Diagram above).

"Prior to differentiating

the Parent (grown-up) from the Adult (grown-up), the childhood qualities (of vibrancy, buoyancy, creativeness, imaginativeness, and spontaneity) could at almost any moment in group treatment settings trigger an opinionated (Parental) element from another person.

"That other person may have been tempted to squash the Child; not recognizing there is a difference between **being objective** and of **being opinionated** about another person's behavior. Accounting for such an attempt to squash a Child may not have been evident prior to differentiating between Adult and Parent.

"In "TA" (transactional analysis) groups, attendees

sometimes became so "cocky" and "self-assured" as to reason they "have the right" to ask (or tell) the group leader something about himself.

"One proof of the validity of the Parent (Third) Circle becomes evident when a student (or patient) of transactional analysis can matter-of-factly give his teacher (or therapist) key information in six words: "Sir, I think that's your Parent." The information could be operationally useful and usable by the teacher (or therapist) within less than thirty seconds. (See Diagram No. 5). A lecturer (or therapist) may after a moment of thought decide to change himself. He might decide he wants to change

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Giving Thank You's, Saying "Thank You"

Dad developed a number of "prescriptions for getting well." He recommended to his patients, students, friends, family, listeners, and readers "Get well first and find out why later."

He wrote: "Give more thank you's to more people. And you can start doing it now." The Adult of the identified person at first is not practiced in the technique of Okaying another person in order to secure a reciprocated OK for himself. The Adult in the person at first 'feels stiff.' Often when first trying out 'Get Well Mechanical Style' the person says: 'It feels phony. I feel like a phony. I feel insincere when I am doing it.' But after some practice, this person com-

mitted to 'getting well' quite often says: 'I feel OK now when I am giving these thank you's and I see the other person warming up back to me. It works.' The initial mechanical stiffness is similar to playing a musical instrument for the first time."

Dad gives an example: "In group Mrs. Fair Thare More was coming to get well of longstanding high blood pressure. 'And-nothing-more-was-said' was the usual payoff to her game of 'Furthermore.' For a long time she rarely talked to someone in group unless in derision ('a shitty remark') or to give a 'troubled mouth' in her group a soothing-toned 'Why-Don't-you' [platitude] ('marshmallow') which on

decoding meant 'go practice drowning' or 'get lost.' Her Adult ego state began on prescription (at first haltingly), to give more 'okays,' 'thank you's,' 'good for you's,' 'you're okays' to other persons in her group. One day, seemingly out of context, in a clear, focused voice, with level countenance and a warm face, she told Teenie Athena: 'Teenia, that lipstick you're wearing sets your complexion off the best I have ever seen you!' Teenia, surprised out of her usual: 'Oh, it's nothing!' get-rid-of cross-up, came level herself and without affectation gave a: 'Why, thank you very much Fair!' Both looked warmly at each other for one full second as group quietly watched."

To Dad
Happy Father's Day

Thank You

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By FH Ernst Jr., MD

Third Circle / the Parent - Part 3 cont.

his physical attitude, voice tone, or method of presentation away from being a "Daddy." He could then become objectively more efficient and effective in accomplishing his own task at hand. Or he could continue, acknowledge the comment and go ahead if he has a program to use his Parent.

"Dr. Berne gave credit in his writings about the Parent ego state to the earlier works of Trigant Burrow's "internalized social images" (1925), Paul Federn's "ego states", and Eduardo Weiss's "psychic presence." It did, however, remain for Dr. Berne (himself) to grasp the full significance of what was only hinted at by those earlier three writers. It took the genius of Dr. Berne to grasp the very large, almost incomprehensibly significant importance of this third category of ego states represented by the **Third Circle** and then to invent his pictorial representation THE PARENT-ADULT-CHILD DIAGRAM which he gave to the world. This diagram and the phrase "transactional analysis" became a part of the social lexicon and public domain during his lifetime. His books "Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy" and "Games People Play" received world wide acclaim in many foreign languages (100). Eric Berne M.D. never intended the words "transactional analysis" to be locked up. He intended them to be used in a generic sense, freely available to all. He was a

generous man.

"In this third (Parental) category of ego states are found the exact replications of the ways of nurturing and disciplining, the prejudices and opinions of the preceding biological parent, expressed exactly as they were by the person's predecessor and felt exactly as they had been by that predecessor who had these self-same "attitudes."

"By extension when a person is behaving identical to his immediate antecedent (Parent) his set of internal feelings will be the same as those of his biologic parent. Behaving is a template for emotional feelings. Several professionals have found that by discerning the Parent in a person it becomes much easier to deduce the plight of the troubled Child of that same person. On the other side of events, by seeing the Child of a person in action it becomes easier to make an educated estimate of what the Parent of the person is like, what his "Daddy" (Parent self) is doing with his wife and children at home. The particular person may also come to see that his own Child self is kept continually distraught and/or deprived by his internal Parent being restrictive. In fact this can be handled by enabling the Adult of the same person to get stronger. This is to say that when the person's intermitently restrictive Parent is a problem along with intervals of Adult behavior, then the professional may decide to encourage

that particular person's Adult to come out more by saying "That's your Adult" during periods of the particular person's Adult behavior. No comments need be made about his restrictive Parent when it is witnessed. When his Adult is identified to him he will also understand on his own that he is being told that that particular behavior is desirable.

"The principle of reciprocal activation between the Parent and the Child of the same person is described in Karen Horney's writings as "Vicious Circles." See the Diagram at the bottom the page.

"One goal of a professional can be to get the Parent and Child inside a particular person to decrease "bugging" each other, "egging" each other on. Having an objective non-partisan person (eg the professional) in the (mix of events) evens the odds numerically. Before therapy starts the patient's Adult has trouble managing his Child and Parent that are struggling with each other.

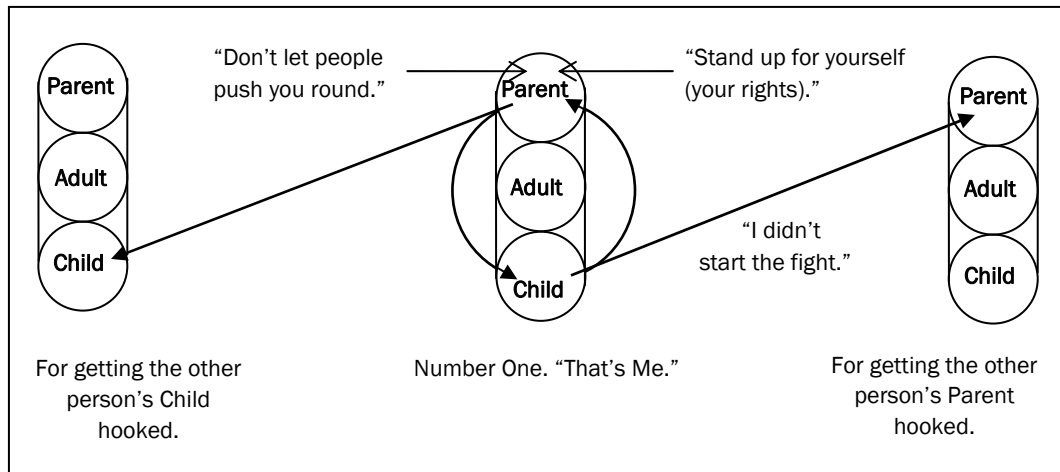
The odds are more even with the professional close by: Adult + Adult vs. Parent + Child.

"The job is to get the person's Adult strong enough to "handle" his own Child. The Diagram below shows the therapist's emphasis on getting the patient's / person's Adult to slow down his Child bugging his own Parent and the Parents

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Parent thinking is sometimes called parametric thinking, i.e., *right or wrong, yes or no, good or bad, should or should not, black or white, always or never*, etc. It is thinking which excludes shadings of meaning. It is a pre-set style of "thinking" which provides an (almost) instantly available responsiveness to a situation of danger or temptation. This latter (Parent thinking) is quite different "thinking" from "what is the best solution for this situation that I can come up with, given a moment to think" (Adult). This Parent "thinking" is contrasted to (Adult) evaluating of a multi-factored event and making a decision on the basis of gradations of time, physical properties, continued unfolding of emotions (in the other and/or the self), which is how his Adult thinks.

If "self-reparenting" were a valid form of parenting, that person would provide a different sense of hominess for himself and for others around him.



Proverbs KJV

Proverbs 1 : 22

“The Speech of Wisdom”

²²How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scornors delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

²³Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. ²⁴Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; ²⁵But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: ²⁶I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; ²⁷When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. ²⁸Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: ²⁹For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: ³⁰They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

³¹Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. ³²For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and

the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. ³³But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

Proverbs 2, “Comment upon the Address of Wisdom”

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; ²So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding; ³Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, *and* liftest up thy voice for understanding; ⁴If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; ⁵Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. ⁶For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and understanding. ⁷He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* a buckler to them that walk uprightly. ⁸He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. ⁹Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; *yea*, every good path.

¹⁰When wisdom entereth into

thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul:

¹¹Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: ¹²To deliver thee from the way of the evil *man*, from the man that speaketh froward things; ¹³Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; ¹⁴Who rejoice to do evil, *and* delight in the frowardness of the wicked; ¹⁵Whose ways *are* crooked, and *they* froward in their paths: ¹⁶To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words; ¹⁷Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. ¹⁸For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. ¹⁹None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life. ²⁰That thou mayest walk in the way of good *men*, and keep the paths of the righteous. ²¹For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it. ²²But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.

Parent - Adult - Child

On pg 34 of “Transactional Analysis In Psychotherapy” Dr. Berne has this to say.

“One of the most difficult aspects of structural analysis in practice is to make the patient (or student) see that Child, Adult and Parent are not handy ideas or interesting neologisms, but refer to phenomena based on actual realities. The point of Mr. Segundo demonstrates this point fairly clearly. The person who stole chewing gum was not

called the **Child** for convenience, or because children often steal, but because he himself stole chewing gum as a child with the same gleeful attitude and using the same technique. The **Adult** was called the Adult, not because he was playing the role of an adult, imitating the behavior of big men, but because he exhibited highly effective reality-testing in his legal and financial operations. The **Parent**

was not called the Parent because it is traditional for philanthropists to be “fatherly” or “motherly,” but because he actually imitated his own father’s behavior **and** state of mind in his philanthropic activities.”

Hebrews

Hebrews 12 : 5

My son, slight not the Lord’s corrections,

Neither faint under His reproof; For the Lord corrects those He loves,

And chastises every son in whom He delights.

Notes on Proverbs 2

Proverbs 2:9-15 “So examine the Right and the Just, And the wise, and then all go well, Then Wisdom will enter your heart, And Knowledge be sweet to your soul. Discretion will watch over you, Reflection herself will attend, Will preserve from the way of Distress, From the persons who speak to pervert; Who wander from Rectitude’s paths, To walk in the ways that are dark, Who delight in the practice of wrong, And rejoice in perversion to vice; Whose courses are all of them crooked, And deception in all that they do!”

From “The Holy Bible in Modern English—Translated direct from the original Hebrew, Chaldee and Greek Languages” by Ferrar Fenton

US Federal Government bureaucracy

People who “work” in the US federal agencies do what it takes to keep their jobs., (good, bad, and ugly). Their biggest complaint usually is too much work and not enough help. This is called job security. Problem for civilians is the back log of unfinished (paper) work. For example a simple Copyright claim should take a couple months instead of 2 years. A Patent claim should be expedited in a few months, not 40. CO2 is a matter of science, not political science. The Inspection of an oil rig operation should be ongoing continuously, not part-time. The Defense Department’s mission should be to Defend [preserve and protect] the United States of America, not ...



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"Mastery of the universe is proportional to the symbols man has by which to represent his universe."

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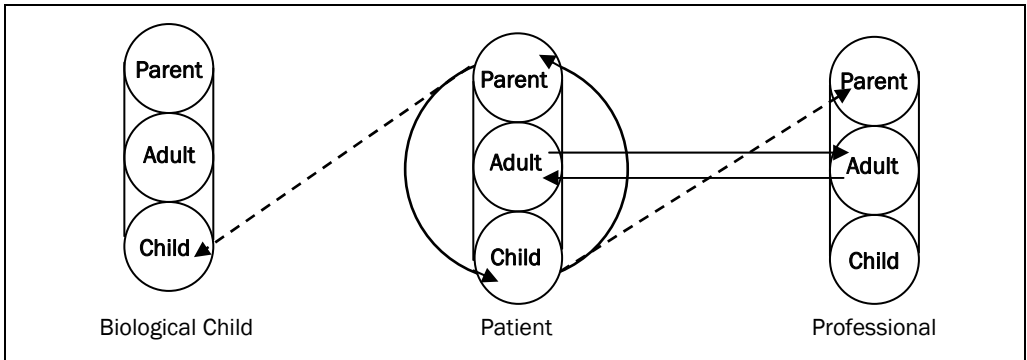
of other people. This done by energizing / activating the Adult in the patient / student and securing the participation of the person's own Adult to bring about a reduction on one side or the other (or both) of the mutual (Parent-Child) bugging the particular person carries on within himself AND with others, especially family members.

"Getting well may be accomplished sooner by asking the identified person what his Adult thinks about his Parent-Child internal dialogue (circling arrows) transactions. For example, by interrupting a person once every twenty to fifty Parent-Child transactions will get-on-with the patient/person's own internal Adult to notice his own internal Child bugging his

ableness of the other person coming back to him. But there will be times when the other person's "Grown-up" provokes his own defiance. Then too, there will be times when his own "Grown-up" (Parent) will stir up defiance or unrealistic compliance in the other person. At this point the Parent circle of the other person can be identified.

"Thus a person gets "hooked" on using his/her own Adult more regularly. He/she gets a better handle on managing himself/herself by strengthening his/her Adult. With a stronger Adult the particular person begins to learn some of the "tricks" of his own adapted Child (being rebellious and/or being a "good compliant Child," for the mo-

Child to respect the Parent, the Parent will reduce his own internal bugging of his own Child. Therefore he will be taking better care of his Childself. This does not mean that a person will admit feeling deprived. Identifying a person's Parent to him may cause him to break off treatment or to experience feeling like an orphaned Child. Often identifying a person's Parent to him is like encouraging the Child of the person in question to (socially) rebel against his own Parent (i.e. to act out). Some individuals have been known to go through a panic and break off treatment when their "Parent" is temporarily "decommissioned" as a result. Properly timed, however, some people welcome the



own Parent. In catching one in twenty or fifty, the Adult of the person will be attending much more to the totality of his own behavior.

"Adult "reinforcement" by the therapist is done by commenting occasionally "that's your Adult" while listening to a troubled person.

"When a person is better able to differentiate his own Adult from his Child he will begin to notice social events he participates in go smoother. His Adult can count on the reason-

ment, in order to take control of social situations away from his own Adult).

"The advantages of having an inside Parent become clearer, too. The three stacked circle diagram shows the (continuing) presence of the Parent inside the person. The Parent offers protection.

"Eric Berne advised newcomers to transactional analysis: "In respect to the Parent, leave the Parent alone," this during his seminars "Introduction to Transactional Analysis" in San Francisco.

"A therapist will do better to leave the Parent of the particular person alone. Often a person feels different when his Parent is identified. When the Parent is identified to the person he/she often feels like he's being scolded for showing his Parent. Remember this. The Parent-Child dialogue is on-going. By getting the

clarification and new information.

"An individual's Parent for practical purposes **does not change**. As a person gets older he does modify how he handles situations requiring "social orderliness (discipline)." But this is to say as experiences multiply, an individual is able to temper his judgments with more Adult. This is different from "self-reparenting." This writer has never seen anyone "re-Parent" himself.

To be continued in Part 4

