

OK Corral

Grid for What's Happening

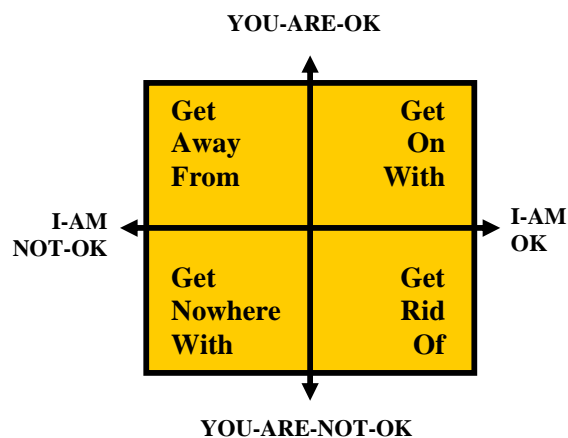
Eric Berne Memorial Scientific Award

Acceptance Speech / Boston, August 14, 1981

by

Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D.

Summer Conference of the
International Transactional Analysis Association
August, 1981
Boston, Massachusetts



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OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening
Eric Berne Memorial Scientific Award Acceptance Speech



2 of 23

Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D.

OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening

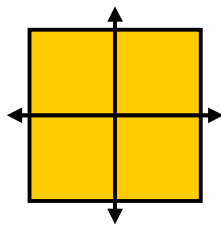
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Unaccustomed as I am to being at Transactional Analysis meetings, it gives me great pleasure to accept this award. There have been a number of distinguished people preceding me who have received this award. However, the most important person to me is the person in whose honor this award is given, the founder and first president of this organization, Eric Berne, M.D.



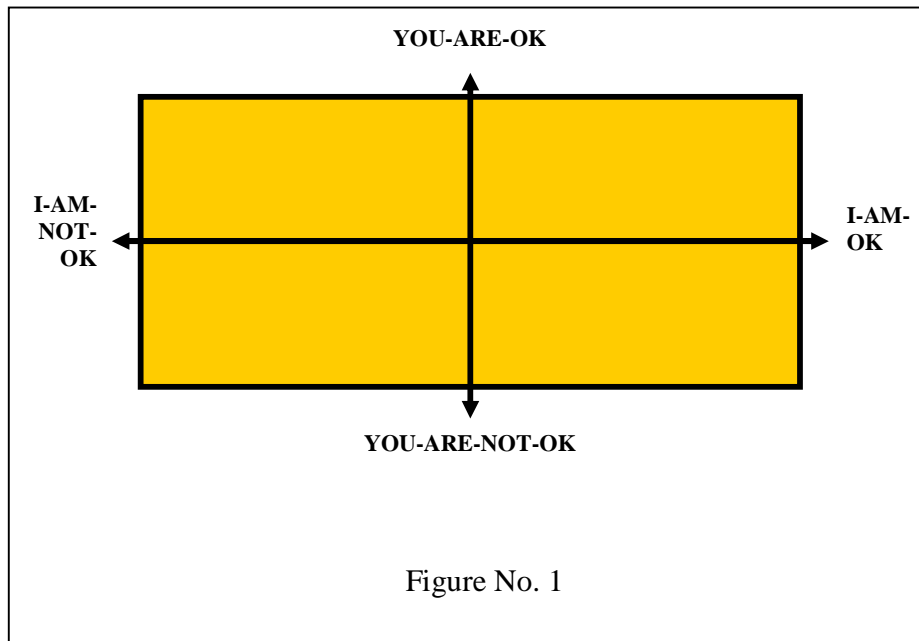
Thanks is also extended to the organization's members for selecting the OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening to receive this honor. It is now referred to as the "Grid for What's Happening" inasmuch as it is a diagram with an associated body of theory which describes what happens between people in their encounters with each other. One class of outcomes of people encounters is to "get-on-with." But get-on-with is only one of the ways people relate to each other. The other three ways are also equally important and valuable as well as describing what people really do with each other.

On my way here to Boston I had an awe inspiring experience driving thru western Massachusetts. Never have I seen a lightning display such as the one that I saw Tuesday evening, three days ago: Stockbridge, Woronoco, Chicopee, Springfield, Palmer. It was like an omen. One hundred fifty to two hundred bolts of lightning ; two dozen bolts of lightning within one hundred yards of my car as we drove here; two to three inches of rain and all of this occurring in a half hour of time. I have never seen this before and many years ago I lived in Worcester for a year.

In accepting the award this evening for the "Grid for What's Happening" I want to show you the Grid and how it is drawn. It is a rectangular enclosure divided into four equal sized quadrants. The horizontal line divides the enclosure into upper and lower halves. This is the "I am" axis of this OK Corral. The arrow pointing to the left is the "I am not OK" side and the



arrow pointing to the right is the "I am OK" side. "I am OK" to the right stands for example: "I am going ahead, moving ahead in my life." The "I am not OK" to the left, stands for "I am regressing, moving backward in life." (See Figure No. 1)



A vertical line divides the enclosure into equal sized left and right halves. The vertical line is the "you are" axis and stands for the "you are" state of affairs in the first person's (I am) life, the life of the designated person.

"You are OK" is represented by the arrow pointing to the top of the page: "I look up to you, I admire you!"

"You are not OK" is represented by the arrow pointing to the bottom of the diagram in the OK Corral. It stands for "I look down on you."

The Grid was developed and is drawn with the Cartesian coordinates in mind.

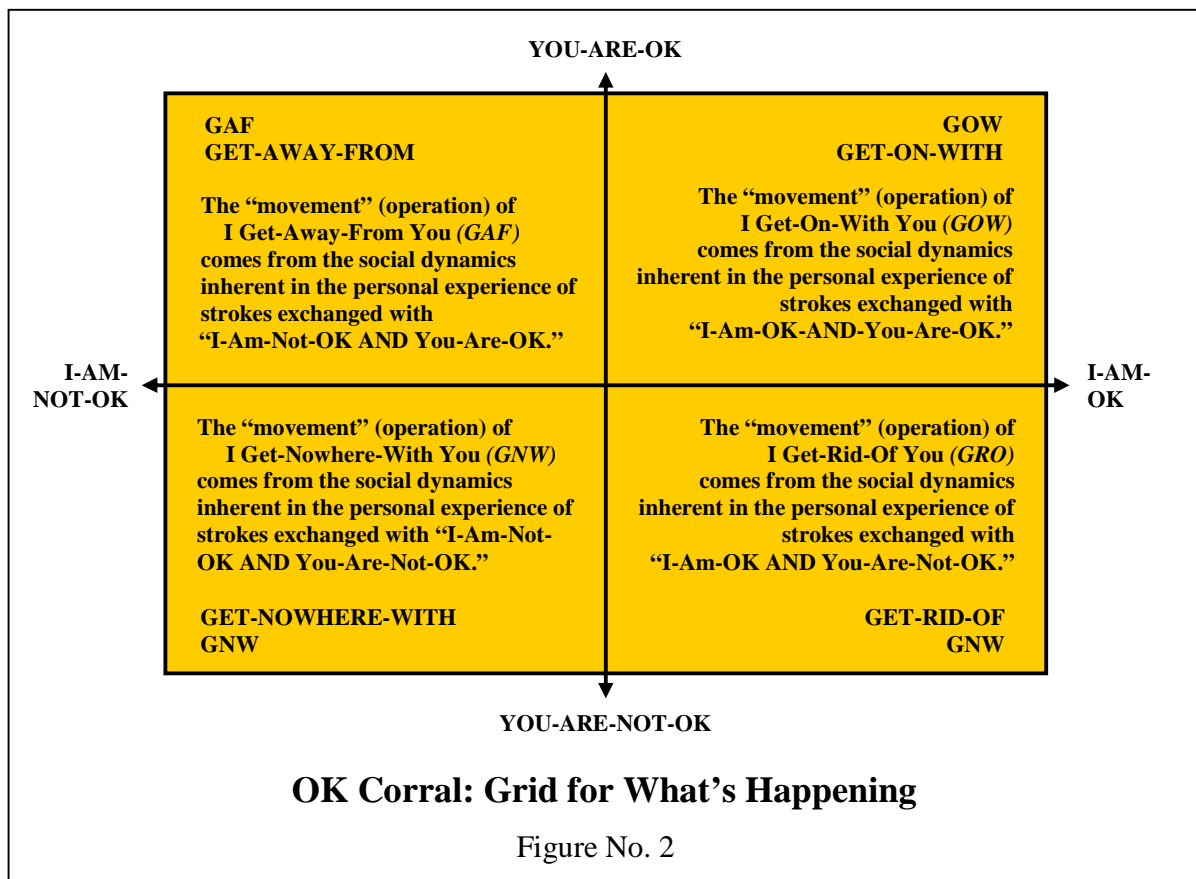
The thing that happens between people or parties of people is that their social operations can be defined by a pair of these "I am" and "you are" lines. The social operation that eventuates from any social encounter will be the resultant (of the combination of vector forces) of a pair of these dynamic forces during stroking.



Each social encounter is concluded in one of four general classes of operation. There are the four general ways that encounters come to their conclusion. Each event with another person is concluded by one of four classes of operations:

- (1) a get-on-with, or
- (2) a get-away-from, or
- (3) a get-nowhere-with, or
- (4) a get-rid-of.

Each operation has its own characteristic pair of dynamics. If you know the dynamics of an event you can figure the operational outcome. And if you know the social operation that resulted from a meeting then you can figure out the personal OK / not-OK in the social experience of the parties, i.e. "I am OK and You are OK", "I am OK and You are not-OK", "I am not-OK and You are OK", or "I am not-OK and You are not-OK" (shown in Figure No. 2).



Each of these operations comes from a two party set of dynamics. A get-on-with event is derived from an "I am OK and you are OK" encounter.



Let me give you some synonymous expressions for the operational terms:

Some get-on-with equivalent phrases are "get ahead", "get onto it", and for clinicians "get well of it."

Some get-rid-of equivalent phrases are "push off," "push away," "repulse."

Some get-nowhere-with equivalent phrases are expressed in the terms "procrastinate," "postpone," "take a rain check," "sleep on it overnight," and "a stand off."

Some get-away-from synonyms are "back off," "back away," "get-away-with it (the goods while getting away from)."

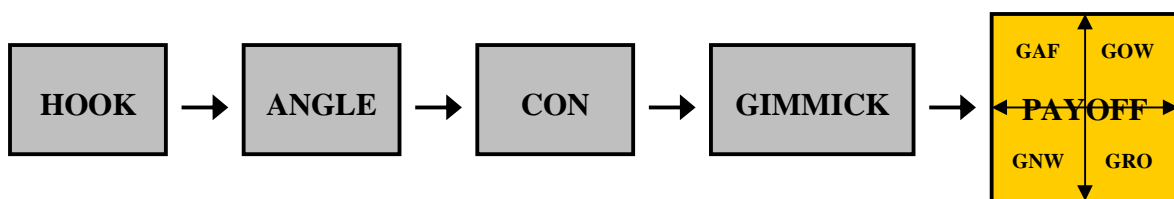
These four types of phrases are used in everyday conversations. It would be unreasonable for a person not to handle at least one social encounter a day in each of the four ways: get-away-from, get-rid-of, get-on-with, get-nowhere-with.

The other day somebody was asking me: "How come there is so much not-OK in the OK Corral?" My response was: "Well, in order to get-on-with some activities you have to get-away-from others. Some things have a higher priority to you than others. To get-on-with some people you need to exercise discipline with yourself and/or others and push others away (get-rid-of). And in some situations it is desirable to put the activity or person on hold (get-nowhere-with). You may not want to let a particular situation wash you away. It's like damming up a creek so that a flood (of things) doesn't wipe you out in the gorge."



The “Grid for What's Happening” has also been useful in understanding the varieties of payoffs at the conclusion of the games people play. (See Figure No. 3) In real life, people play games, and the payoff of a game can be classified in one of the four varieties of social outcome:

- A get-on-with (for example a mutual laugh)
- A get-nowhere-with (for example stony silence)
- A get-away-from (for example turn tail and leave)
- A get-rid-of (for example a withering criticism)



The Game Diagram (F.H. Ernst Jr., M.D. The Encounterer, 1969)

CON + GIMMICK = RESPONSE → SWITCH → CROSS-UP → PAYOFF
 (Confusion)
C + G = R → S → X → P

The GAME FORMULA (Eric Berne, M.D., 1970)

Figure No. 3

The inevitable payoff of a game occurs in one of the four corners of the “OK Corral, Grid for What's Happening.” For example, a woman in session said to her husband: "If it weren't for you I wouldn't have these children and have a home with you (for a mutual laugh and squeezing each others hands, a get-on-with).”

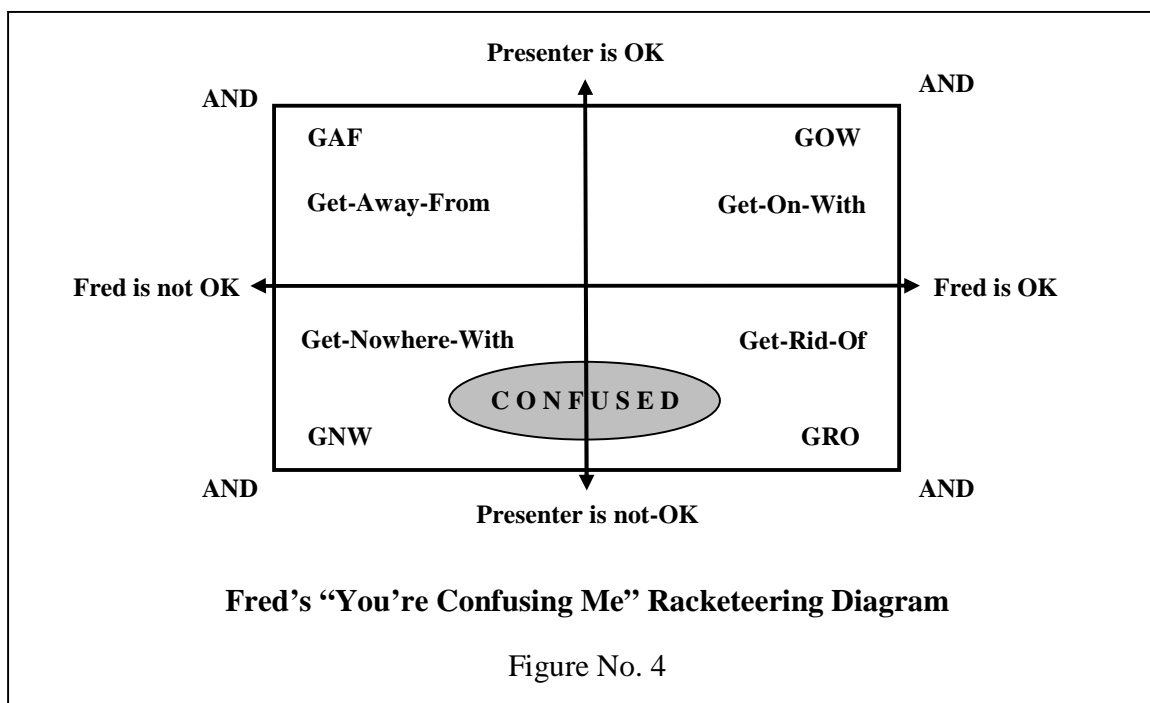
The OK Corral diagram has also been taught to and used with students in a manner that enabled them to achieve improved social control of themselves. After learning the diagram many students were able to increase the number of their get-on-with’s in a day. They were able to decrease the sheer volume of get-away-from’s in a day, a get-away-from coming from “I’m not OK and You are OK.”



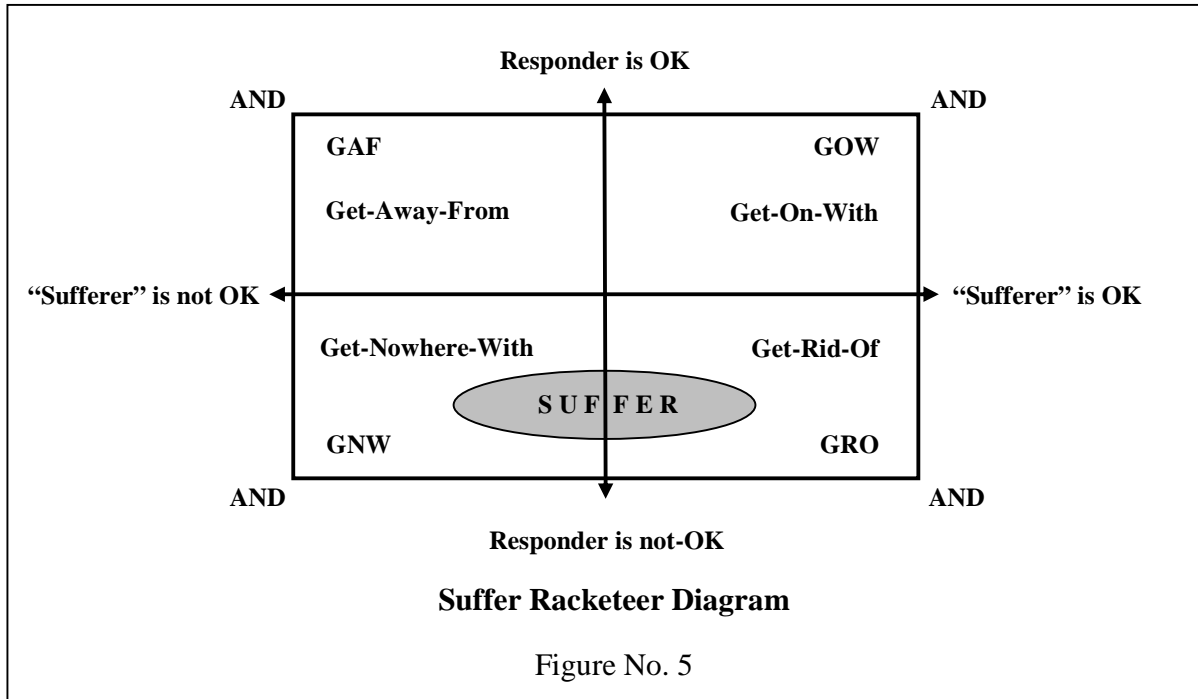
This “OK Corral: Grid for What’s Happening” has been used by patients, trainees, and teachers to assist them in understanding psychological rackets (emotional blackmail) and how to handle these coercive feelings of others. They learned that a psychological racket is a specialized show of coercive feelings, placing a burden on the other person, victimizing the other person, psychologically blackmailing the recipient (responder).

For example, Fred often times started up a discussion on an agenda item with the phrase "I'm sorry to say this but, this (you) confuses me." This kind of opening regularly placed a burden on the presenter for that agenda matter. When Fred said "this confuses me" he meant it was the presenter's fault that he was confused (it was because of the presenter). Routinely, when Fred led off with "this confuses me" the presenter's agenda item ended up being postponed or rejected. Fred got rid of the project (and presenter) or set up a get-nowhere-with (temporary style) by delaying decisive action. (See Figure No. 4)



A psychological racket is a specialized show of (coercive) feeling. A racket is diagrammatically represented in the “Grid for What's Happening” by drawing an oval enclosure, in the lower half of the “Grid for What's Happening.”



The name of the specialized coercive feeling is placed inside the enclosure to specify the type of racket being expressed. The “suffer” racket is shown in Figure No. 5.



There are some more serious matters to discuss now. I didn't know I'd be saying them here, but this looks like a good place. Most of you are good people and about those who aren't – I can still run pretty fast.

The stacked circles  and the OK Corral  have been taught in all grades of school: kindergarten, first grade thru graduate college level. And those students who have learned to differentiate their own Adult from their Child from their Parent self now have better personal control of their own behavior and can better select their social direction. They have gotten past the point of nagging the teachers or other students about which side the other guy is showing (Parent, Adult, or his Child). They no longer need their instructor's repeated re-instructing. They can use the PAC and the OK Corral diagrams to regulate their own behavior and life for:



increased personal satisfaction.



improved pleasure with other students and teachers.



increased class grades by one grade point.



increased comprehension of the subject matter or of the (social) situation confronting them.

The kindergartners learned the PAC's and OK Corral even before they could read. You know, you can teach four year olds algebra if you remember to use four year old language.

We stopped the string of annual spring riots by teaching an introductory course of transactional analysis to a group of high school instructors. We worked out a set of procedures with the teachers to make sure the students learned and became able to use Parent Adult Child, OK Corral, “Howdy Diagram,” and a few other concepts. It worked. As of 1981 we haven't had anymore riots in that particular school. It's been almost four decades since the last one (as of this writing in 2008).

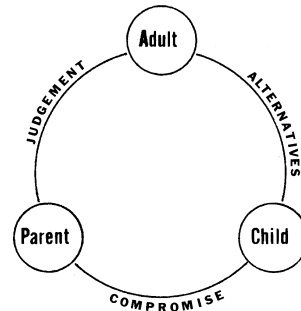
In 1981 there were prominent members in Transactional Analysis who (even now) continue to strongly and articulately advocate that bad actors "should protect their not-OK Child." Following the directions of their particular prominent members is the path to figuratively protecting “the Frog inside the bad actor, remaining a Frog and continuing to serve under King Frog.”



The healthy goal is to achieve personal autonomy: thinking for himself, be a grownup in his own life, instead of being a Child running a grownup's life, instead of a person's own Child living a not-OK life. This goal involves getting well of the Child being not-OK. The procedure for accomplishing this getting well is to:

STOP DOING NOT-OK THINGS !

AND it would mean unblocking the person's own judgment. Pay attention to your own Adult and Parent. Invite or require your Child to stay out of messing up his own Adult's reasoning. Get the Child out of Adult reasoning. Clean up Child contamination of Adult thinking. STOP RE-KIDDING YOURSELF. Don't let your Judgment or Alternatives stay blocked. (See Figure No. 6)



Art Rissman's TRILOG

Figure No. 6

Getting well of a not-OK Child is represented theoretically in Figure No. 7. The theory for getting well of a "not-OK Child" is (for the Adult and Parent) to decrease stroking the Child's not-OK behavior. Instead, stroke up the Child's own "I am OK" behavior and stroke up the Child's behavior of giving "You are OK" to others.

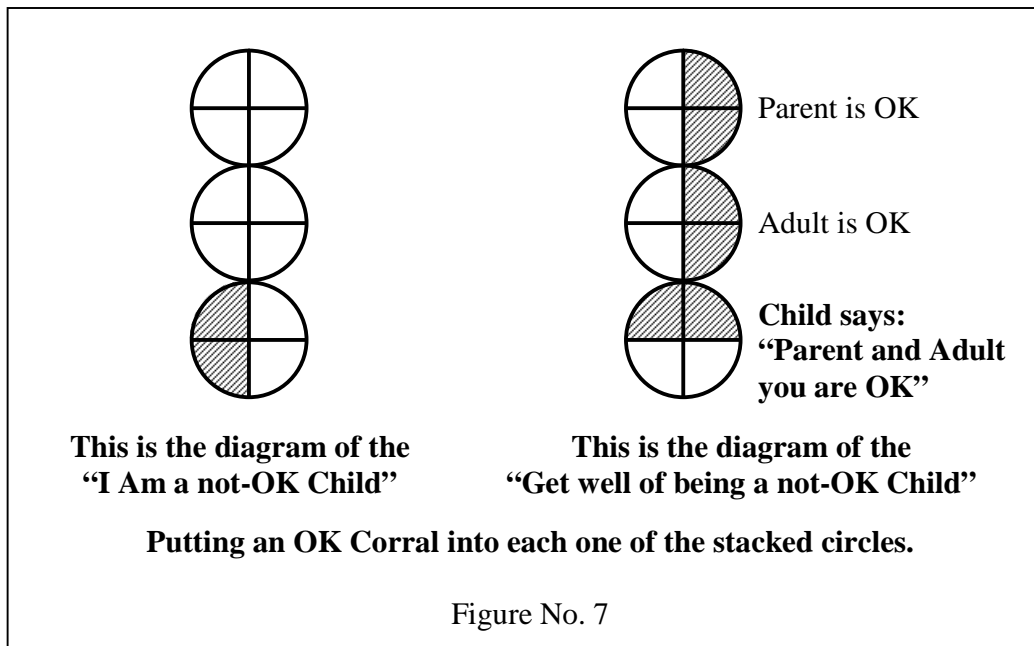
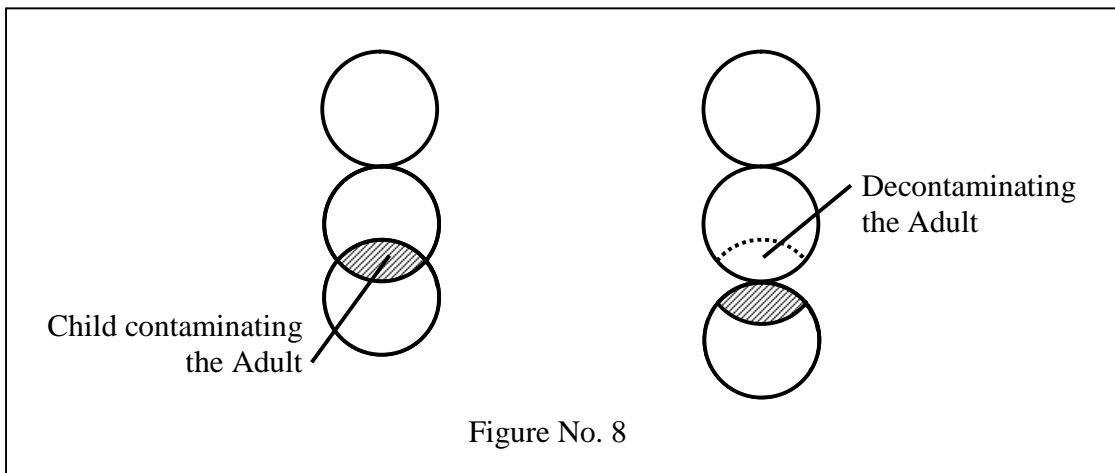


Figure No. 7

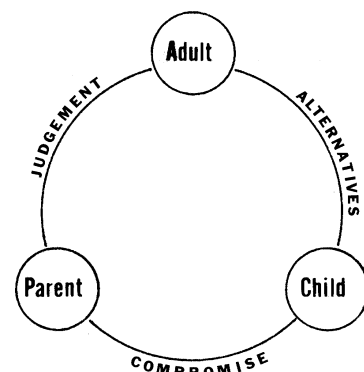


By contrast, trainers of the “not-OK Child” teach how to protect the “not-OK Child” and how a “not-OK Child” can become even more not-OK. The trainer (“not-OK Parent” and/or “not-OK Adult”) is interested in stroking (up) the not-OK (Child based) activity.

Particularly important in getting well of a "not-OK Child" is for the person's Parent and the person's Adult to keep their own "I am OK." This person will need more help (treatment) to keep his Child out of his own Adult; require his Child to stay out of his Adult on predictable occasions and at particular times. This is called decontaminating his Adult. (See Figure No. 8)



Also helpful in getting well of having a “not-OK Child” is by using Art Rissman’s TRILOG. (See Figure No. 9) For events that enter at your Child, i.e. "when your Child is facing out" keep your judgment loop active and unblocked. This single act both theoretically and practically is the most beneficial for getting well of a not-OK Child behavior. Those who advocate a person protect his not-OK Child are encouraging that person to compromise himself, which in the long run, is a bad compromise and leads to blocking reasonable compromises.



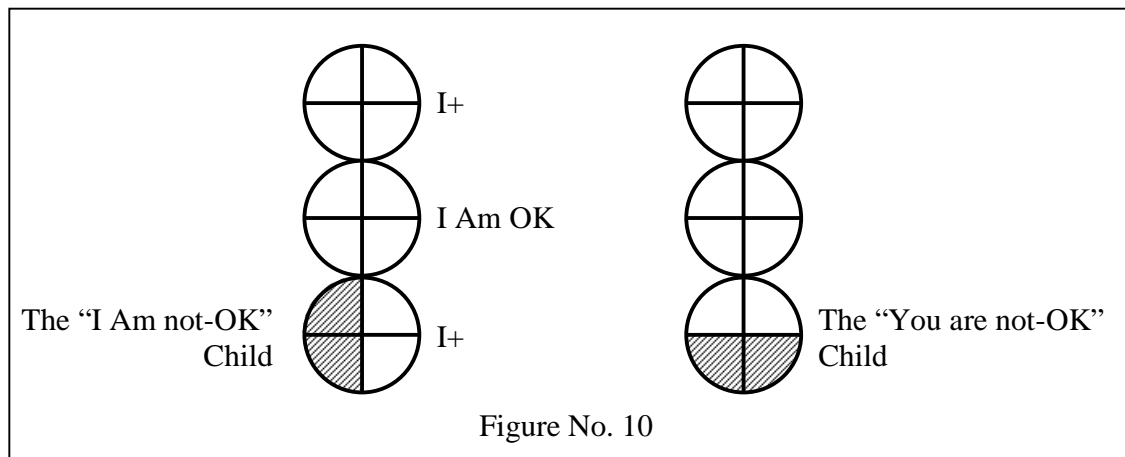
If a person's Child is getting in trouble, more than likely he is having a problem using his own judgment. This is an indication that it is time for the person's own Parent and own Adult to talk it over with each other, to get his own Adult-Parent dialogue going again.

Another way to approach this is to use Pete Stuntz's method ¹ of using the three chair or five chair exercises. Each chair is labeled with a different part of the person's personality. For example when the person sits in the chair labeled Adult he talks to the other chairs labeled with the other parts of his personality. The Adult thus can get a view and feelings of his other selves put into words. (Three chairs: one each for Parent, Adult, and Child; Five chairs: one each for Disciplining Parent, Nurturing Parent, Adult, natural Child, and adapted Child.) This exercise helps a person get well of his Child's "I am not-OK" behavior, i.e. discontinue protecting his own "I am not-OK Child" behavior.

¹ Stuntz, Edgar C. "Pete", M.D.: "Multiple Chair Technique", Transactional Analysis Journal 3:2, April 1973.



There are three categories/methods used by some people for protecting the "I am not-OK" Child. One way used in some groups to protect the not-OK Child is by directing the Child's own "I am not-OKness" onto someone else. Give the other guy not-OK's, give out put downs, belittle the other person, ridicule him, degrade him, jeer him. People who use this method get better at it after long hours of practice, rehearsing, and external coaching. The person projects his "I am not-OK" into a "You are not-OK." It is done by channeling the strength of the "I am not-OK" onto someone else. (See Figure No. 10) It is done by feeding the Child external objects on whom to vent anger, hatred, and put downs; the closer the objects are to him the better. A term for this particular skill is "having a case of the brown mouth disease." If you look at their tongues you'll find, sure enough, they are brown. ²



² Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: The path of protecting one's own not-OK Child leads to alienation from real people and eventually invalidation of yourself from family and others you trusted (as a child) in your own childhood. Protecting your own not-OK Child allows a person to pursue a path of social criminality. When a person protects his own not-OK Childself, he becomes more proficient with psychological rackets. Learning how to use rackets more efficiently becomes easier since those rackets protect being "not-OK." As this increases for such a "not-OK Child way of life," the emphasis on giving "you are not-OK" to others is to become better at disrupting the lives and thinking of others. As "Mr. not-OK" improves these tactics his chances of "not getting blamed for it" improves. When a person protects his own not-OK Child he gets better at fast talking, he gets better at diverting the attention of others off his own disruptions and he gets better at finding fault with and placing the blame onto somebody else.

Protecting the (your) not-OK Child leads to becoming better at not giving yourself away, at not showing your authentic emotions. And it will lead, eventually, to not knowing if you have any of your own feelings left. It can lead to violating and interfering in the lives of people who have cared for you and whom you looked up to when you were little. Protecting your not-OK Child is the vehicle on the road to becoming a psychopath: becoming charming, and "too good to be true," one who would betray her employer or turn her younger sister out on the school ground to be viciously beaten up; one who would plot his father's death then his esteemed teacher's demise.

It is my clinical experience that some people have been done in by external psychological means alone. You know, not everyone that tells you they love you is saying it from a philanthropic, nurturing, generous, or passionate frame of reference. Sometimes it is said to you to get you to corner yourself inside yourself; e.g. turn your Child against your Parent; to turn your own Parent self against your own Child self.

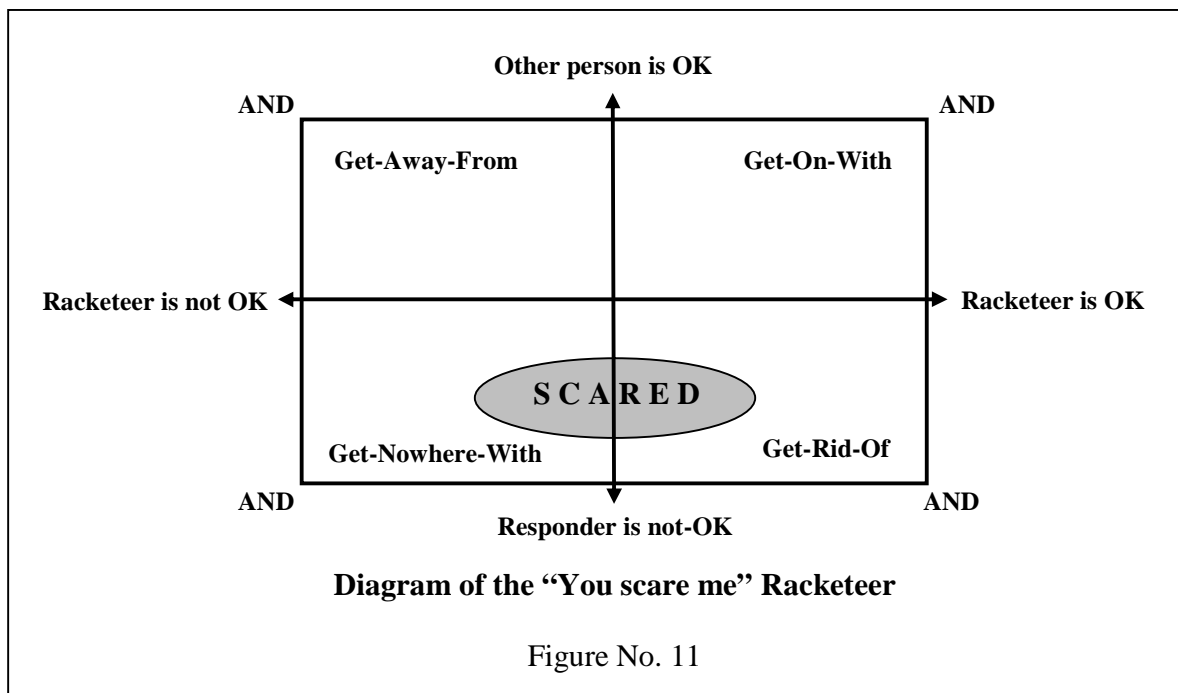


The second category of methods for protecting the (I am) not-OK Child is the use of psychological rackets. This has already been briefly discussed earlier. Some rackets are:

- You're confusing me.
- You're hurting me (my feelings).
- You make me feel guilty.
- You're making me suffer.
- You're making me cry.
- You're scaring me.

A racket is a specialized show of coercive feelings that puts a burden on the other guy. A favorite one for some to observe is "You're discounting me (hurting my feelings)." Predictably the first to call out "You're discounting me" has the other guy squirming. (See Figure No. 11)

That is what a racket is about, "it is because of you."³



³ Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: "Coercive Feelings, Psychological Rackets in the OK Corral", Addresso' Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 2008.



The third category of methods for protecting the not-OK Child is symbiosis. This is where three or five people represent one individual personality. (See Figure No. 12)

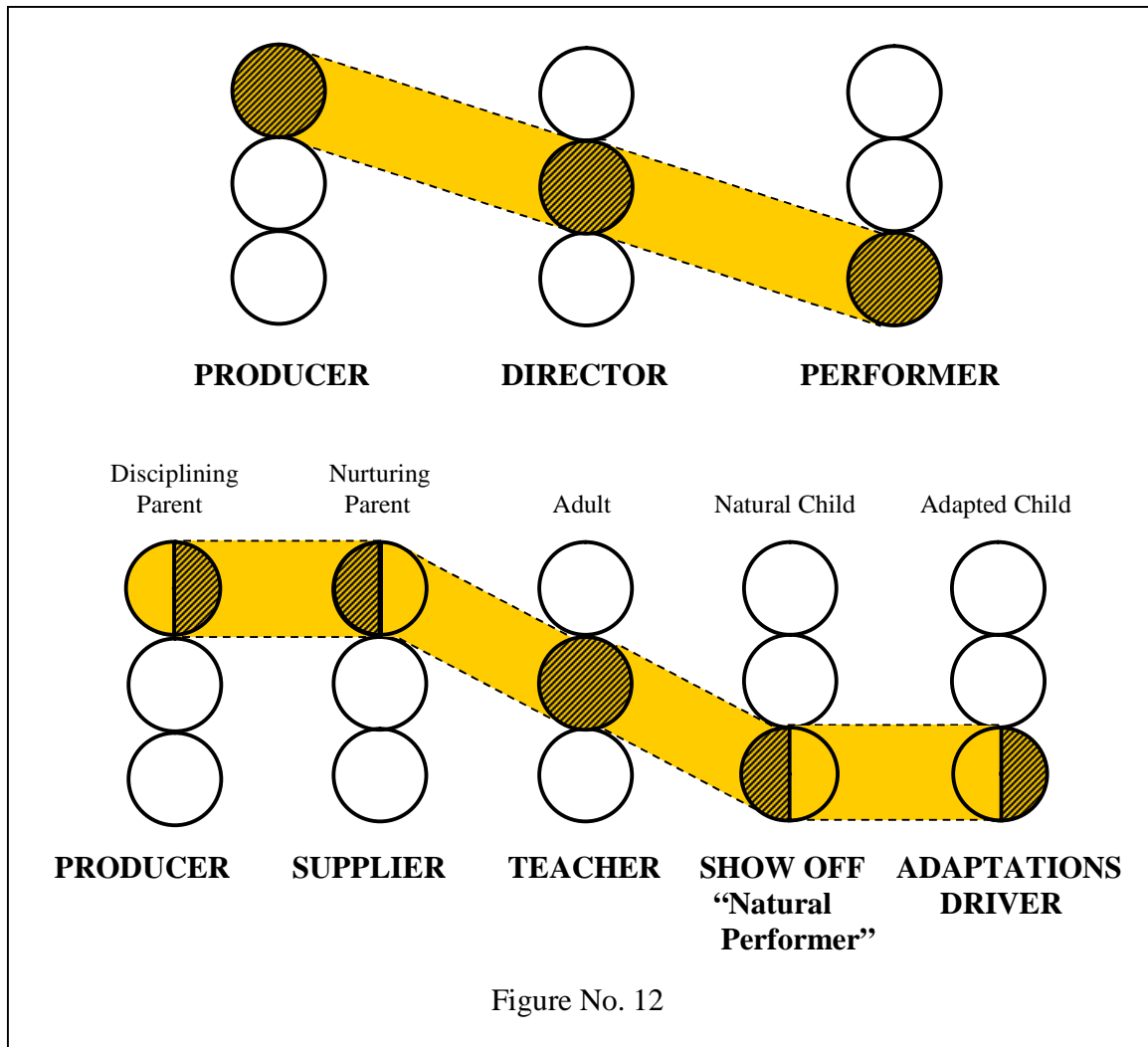


Figure No. 12

In these two diagrams the individuals involved may take turns in who does what, with whom, in what performing situations and with whose driving sense of motivation (and with someone else's skill of directing). Here the individuals who are bonded together in this manner will take turns taking care of each other's (I am) not-OK Child, as each member takes his turn carrying out his own (I am) not-OK "on stage" performances (jobs, assignments, activities). In the symbiosis methods the people bonded thus together take care of the person who is carrying out the particular "I am not-OK" act. For example, this would have been how a trio handled the trigger puller of the threesome that blew off the head of a woman cashier at the ticket window in

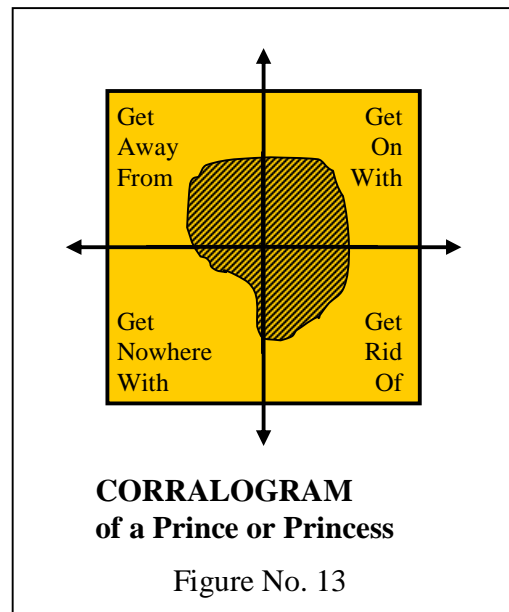


Berkeley (about 1970). It would take at least one trio to handle the tensions, guilts, and shakes of that event. In that and in most unsolved violence situations the trio group is most concerned in keeping the new performer from "giving it away" after carrying out the crime. The trio is designed to bring the "new killer" along thru his initial jitters following his first acts of violence.

The Corralogram

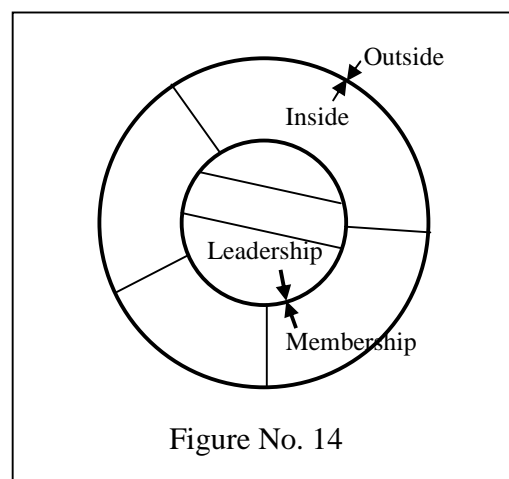
Another way to use the "OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening" is to draw an enclosure inside the grid showing a person's social operations. You can use the grid to graph or diagram how a person balances the use of these four operations in his life. This graph is called the Corralogram. (Figure No. 13)

The same manner of diagram can also be used to illustrate the operations of any organization or group.



Group Dynamics Diagram

The well known Group Dynamics Diagram⁴ shows forces in operation at the two major boundaries. (See Figure No. 14)

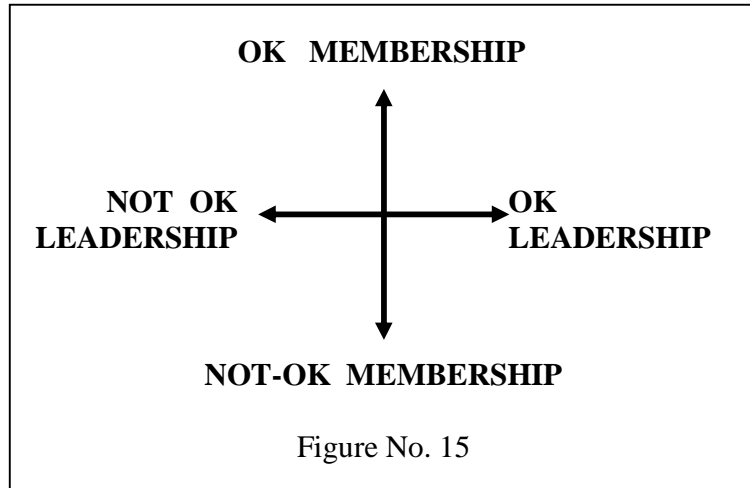


⁴ Berne, Eric M.D.: "The Structure and Dynamics of Organizations and Groups", Grove Press, NY, NY, 1963.

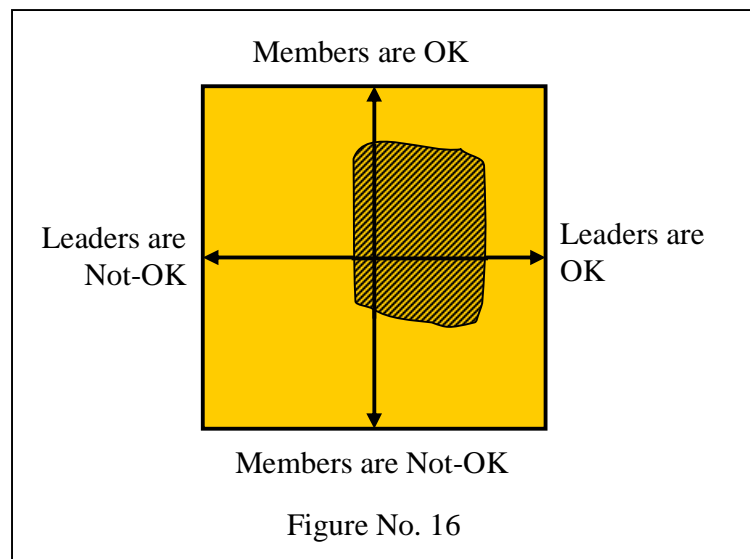


In addition we can now describe the nature of the OK Corral social operations at each of these boundaries with the Grid for What's Happening. In this discussion I am going to refer to operations and dynamics at the Internal Major Group Dynamics Boundary; at the membership leadership boundary.

In this instance the horizontal axis will represent the leadership and the vertical axis will represent the membership. (See Figure No. 15)



The 1976 directory of The International Transactional Analysis Association shows it had 10,000 members.⁵ This was up from five hundred members in 1970. This increase of membership was the result of a large body of the members experiencing a lot of get-on-with within the ITAA. There were many opportunities for get-on-with experiences between the individual members and the leaders. The 1970 corralogram diagram of I.T.A.A. would have looked like the corralogram of a prince or princess. Most events between leadership and individuals were of a get-on-with nature. (See Figure No. 16)

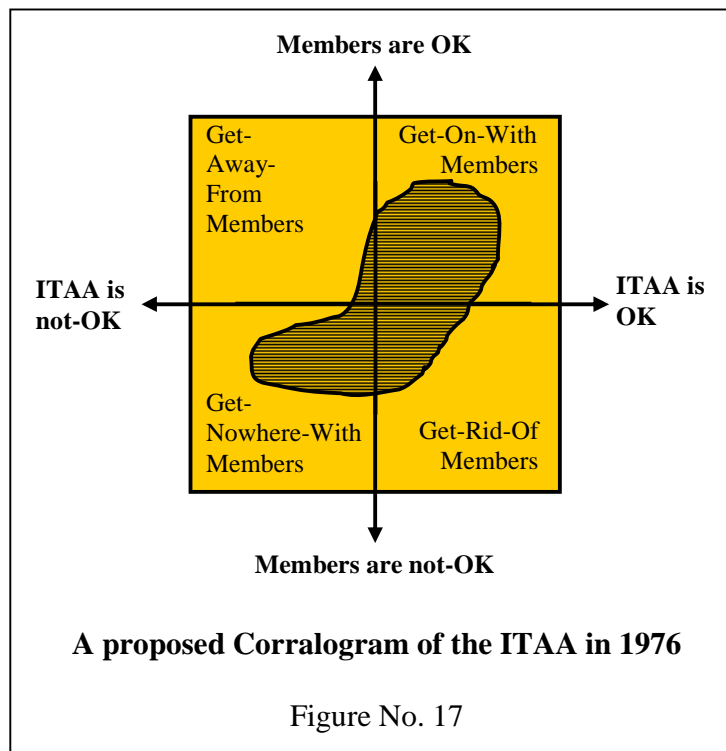


Between 1965 and 1974 the membership climbed from 200 up toward 7,000. In 1976 membership topped off at 10,000 as the club stabilized and most power struggles had leveled out. The club appeared to be very viable at that stage.

⁵ Membership Directory for 1976, International Transactional Analysis Association



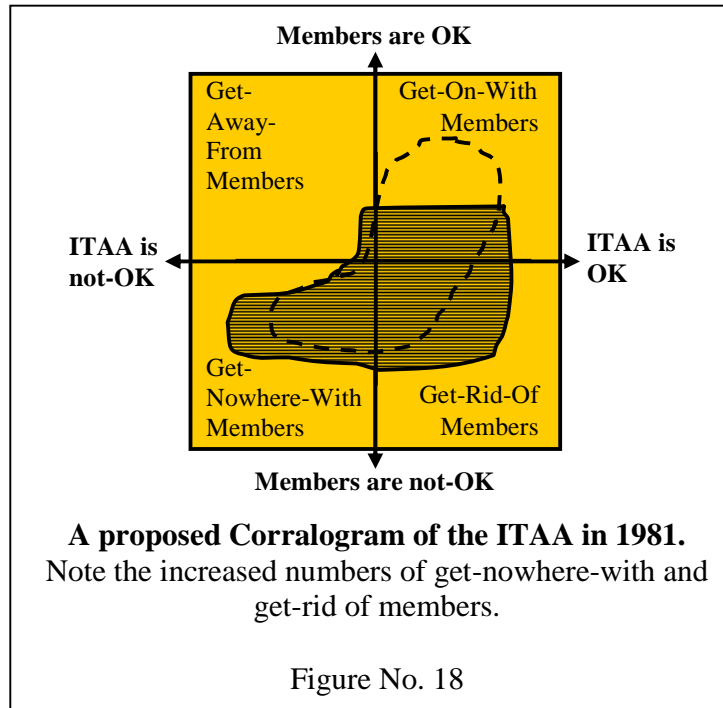
Then procedures for disciplining individual members began to be emphasized, e.g. ethics and standard's, postponement of graduation from provisional status. (The rules kept being changed, testing was politicized, likelihood of becoming members of advanced status evaporated, incentives were taken away. Many saw this as betrayal. Many thought they had a contract with ITAA.) The Corralogram in Figure No. 17 shows that by 1976 more not-OK's were being given out to members. More "Provisional Advanced Members" were being kept on hold "for seasoning, experience", etc. At this point significant numbers of members began dropping out of the club. The organization's leadership was seen backing down less and less from decisions (vis-à-vis the membership) once they were made.⁶ There continued however, to be considerable zest among the membership. Between 1976 and 1981 membership dropped by 4,000, from 10,000 to 6,000. Whatever the reasons or causes, this represented a decreased number of get-on-with experiences by members in the club (vis-a-vis each other and with the governing body). This was also reflected in the trend of decreasing attendance at annual conferences.



⁶ Letters to the editor: various editions of the "Transactional Analysis Journal."



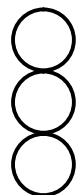
The numbers of people joining the organization in 1981 was less than the numbers discontinuing membership. (See Figure No. 18) From an outsider's point of view, the club is less appealing. From the inside this means that the leadership is giving fewer meaningful "you are OK" strokes to members than in previous years and the leadership is giving more "you are not-OK" strokes to both members and outsiders.



In terms of the Ego-gram⁷ we might extrapolate that there has been a decreased attention to authentic nurturing and that some of the increased disciplining has been experienced as personal attacks; i.e. "critical" Parent contrasted to firm limit setting. For example, since 1974 there were fewer get-on-with's and fewer opportunities for entrepreneurs to show their goods at annual conferences.

Berne described increased income as one of the benefits of using the three stacked circles. Parent - Adult - Child .

As an organization lets you learn to fly on your own and does not cut you off at the pockets, does not restrict or tax your individual efforts, the members then experience a get-on-with. To the extent the club restricts or taxes a person, for example, for whatever reasons were given to a member, to deny him the chance to sell his books or other wares. It was a discontinuance of a portion of the get-on-with offered to the members by the organization. Opportunity for upward mobility in the club and a chance for private (enterprise) success were



⁷ Dusay, Jack M.D.: "Egogram"



two major get-on-with incentives for forming and staying with the club. When the capitalists, the ones who have goods to sell are instead cut off from this activity then the club begins to shrivel and wither; so also with extending the period for “indentured servitude” of the **provisional advanced member**; lengthening the time required of “provisional status” before being considered for testing to be an advanced member.

The reasons given in the early seventies for cutting off the entrepreneurial "commercialism" at conferences and for extending the training interval requirements all sounded plausible enough at the social level. Reasons given for making the small time capitalists stop selling their wares at the conferences included "we don't want competition with Trans Pubs," "our insurance doesn't cover this," the nature of the contract the club made with the hotel for its conference and more sneering references to "commercialism." The reasons given for more training time being needed included "standards" and "the reputation of transactional analysis."

Whether these events in the 1970's decade of ITAA were coincidental or were cause-and-effect, nevertheless, it became evident there was a major reduction in the amount of get-on-with in the club by the time the 1980's arrived.

At the beginning of the 1970's the potential financial advantages to the individual from knowing transactional analysis and belonging to the ITAA were evident - fees for training and teaching trips. The book “I'm OK - You're OK”⁸ became a best seller. Seminars, training programs, publications and road shows began to blossom at an astounding rate.

At the Annual Conferences of 1972 to 1973 there was a five fold increase in wares and services offered for sale. However, even before the success became evident, the leadership in early 1971 began to formulate, program, plan, and implement regulating measures to control this growth (organizational PPBS). By the time of the 1974 Annual Conference, restrictions were in place, e.g. preventing on-the-spot sales of material by affiliated members. Coincidentally, that was the same conference that Trans Pubs bookstore hours resembled banking hours plus having a "closed for lunch" sign, (out to lunch) mid-day interval.

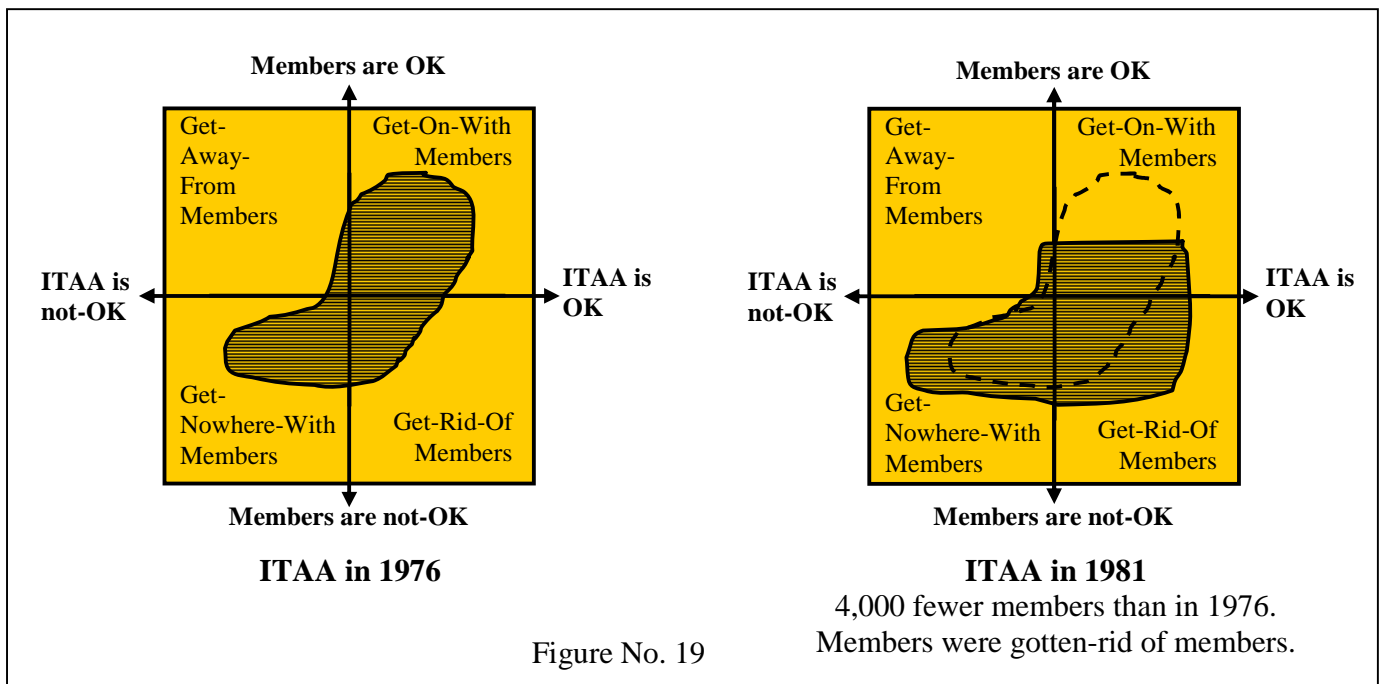
Requirements for advanced member recognition became much more cumbersome and restrictive between 1971 and 1974. Indentured servitude (provisional status) was lengthened out to seven years in some classifications. The standardization fad, limited science.

⁸ Harris, Thomas A. M.D.: “I'm OK, You're OK”, Avon Books, New York, NY, 1967, 1968, 1969.



Organizational codes were passed with increasing penalties and sanctions. Attempts were made to trademark the words “transactional analysis” and the stacked circles; “to protect them.” The symbol of the stacked circles became a target of needing “protection.” Trademark was claimed. (?)⁹ Effectively people were frightened off from using the stacked circles in their entrepreneurial activities. Threats of members being sued began to be heard at conferences, for showing the snowman diagram as part of the portfolio of wares. By intimation and intimidation this educational, informational tool was placed farther and farther from the uses for which its author-inventor intended it.¹⁰

In 1974 the organization had 6,000 members. In 1976 the organization had 10,000 members and by 1981 membership was back down to 6,000. Effectively the organization got-rid-of 4,000 members from 1976 to 1980. (See Figure No. 19) The fact that members did not stay is on them. Nevertheless, those 4,000 did get away from the organization. From the organization's point of view (and effectively from the leadership's point of view) this has been a get-rid-of those 4,000.



⁹ Does the mystic / mythology continue today regarding the use of the three stacked circles and the words transactional analysis?

¹⁰ Can an educational symbol, a generic diagram in unrestricted general public use for fifteen (15) years be trademarked and then its further informational teaching use be prevented? Who is allowed to use this diagram? Under what conditions? Can it only be printed in the official ITAA organs? The permitted use parameters are not specified by ITAA - only the restrictions.



There are other reasons for the big membership fall. Teaching members who did not belong to “the new teacher assembly line factory” were threatened they would lose their teaching member certificate if half of their student trainees did not pass their exams for advanced membership. Many teaching members upon recognizing a stacked deck simply refused to sponsor new candidates for advanced membership. The view was that the ‘teacher producing factory’ that staffed the examination committees were in the drivers seats.

"Standards" were being tightened everywhere. I know teaching members who have quit teaching transactional analysis and they were good at it. Those teachers had vitality, aliveness, enthusiasm for the outfit and gave freely of themselves to us, the ITAA. Those of us still active in the ITAA in the early 1980's remember them by name.

At the time of first writing this article in 1981 a very well known and a top level member in ITAA, like being a PhD, notified me personally that he was resigning his Clinical Teaching Membership and instead becoming an Associate Member of ITAA.

Well, Dr. Berne was an advanced member in the American Group Psychotherapy Association. He got tired of the nonsense “and resigned his advanced membership in the AGPA and traded it in for an associate membership.” He did not like what "the boys in New York" were doing.

(At the time of this speech in 1981, writer was a part of the ITAA club. He took pride in it. He wanted more get-on-with events, less trouble in the back room, more get-on-with for people. By 1985 he had decided to discontinue all membership in ITAA.)

The fact is, the diagrams (symbols) are here. They will live on past the individuals who developed them. This is an asset we can just put into our pocket and accept.

Sometime in 1962 the chief of the boys in New York sent an unsolicited reprint of a paper he wrote. It had a phrase in it that stands out today: "... eradicate the weeds that blemish my creation" ¹¹ Berne did not take this lightly. Sometime later Eric Berne began to quip: “Someday this outfit may very well self destruct.” That self destruction (now in 2008 is almost total) still remains a potential reality. What was it that Eric Berne, M.D. understood? What was Dr. Eric Berne telling us?

Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D.

¹¹ Slavson, Sam R.: “A Critique of the Group Therapy Literature”, Acta psychother. 10: 62-73 (1962).

