Transactional Analysis

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Transactional Analysis

- Formulated by Eric Berne in the early 1960’s.
- Some clinicians classify as an almost purely cognitive theory with a linkage to psychoanalysis.

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Eric Berne

- Born in May 10, 1910 in Montreal, Canada.
- Graduated from McGill University 1935 with medical degree.
- Became U.S. citizen and served in armed forces during World War-II where he started practicing group therapy.
- After the war he moved to California and resumed the psychoanalytic training he had started before the war.
- After being turned down for membership in the Psychoanalytic Institute he devoted his time to the development of transactional analysis.
- 1964 published *Games People Play*
Core of transactional analysis (TA) in 1954
Berne was involved in the psychoanalysis when the patient suddenly said, “I’m not a lawyer, I’m just a little boy,”

Sparked the idea that each of us contains a child ego state accompanied by parent and adult ego states.

- After listening to his patients relating “games” for some 30 years, Berne decided to gather some of these into a catalog.
- Led to Games People Play (1964)
Phases of TA Formulation
(Dusay, 1977)

- **1st Phase (1955-1962)**
  - Berne developed the concept of ego states.
  - Three ego states: parent, child, adult.

- **2nd Phase (1962-1966)**
  - Concentrated on ideas about transactions and games.
  - International Transactional Analysis Association formed.

- **3rd Phase (1966-1970)**
  - Emphasized the reasons some individuals choose to play games in life.

- **4th Phase (1970 on)**
  - He and his followers emphasized action and energy distribution.

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View of Human Nature/Personality

- An optimistic theory.

- **Basic assumption** is that people can change despite any unfortunate events of the past.

- **Anti-deterministic** - believing that people have choices in their lives.
Major Methods of Understanding and Predicting Human Behavior

- **Structural Analysis** – understanding what is happening and predicting human behavior. Analyze a person’s personality (parent, child, adult)
- **Transactional Analysis** – describing what happens between two or more people.
- **Life position** “I’m ok your ok”? 
- **Game Analysis** – understanding Ulterior transactions between individuals leading to payoff that may lead to bad feelings.
- **Script Analysis** – understanding the life plan that an individual is following.

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I. Structural Analysis

EACH OF US IS REALLY THREE PEOPLE!!!!!
Transactional Basis

- **Id** – Pleasure Principle
- **Ego** - Realistic Principle
- **Super-Ego** - Ethical Principle
Each person is considered to have three functional ego states, no matter how old they were:

- Child, parent, and adult.

**Ego state** — a “consistent pattern of feeling and experience directly related to a corresponding pattern of behavior” (Berne, 1964)
The Three Ego States

- Parent- “Do as I do”
- Child- “What shall I do?”
- Adult- “I will be frank with you”
Characteristics of Ego States

- Each ego state has particular verbal and non-verbal characteristics, which can be observed, if you are watching people.
- Each ego state has a positive and negative aspect.
- We shift from one ego state to another in transactions.
- Biological conditions (age, sex, etc) are irrelevant to these ego states.

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I. Child Ego State

- First ego state to develop
- **Natural Child (PRINCE)** - the part of the person that is spontaneous, impulsive, feeling-oriented, and often self-centered and pleasure-loving, he is Hateful/loving/spontaneous/playful
- **Intuitive بديهي Child (LITTLE PROFESSOR)** - Thoughtful/imaginative/creative
- **Adapted Child (FROG)** - the compliant part of the personality that conforms to the wishes and demands of parental figures. He is fearful/guilty/ashamed

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TURNING PEOPLE INTO FROGS

- People are born princes and princesses
- Their parents turn them into frogs.
- Parents script (put the plan of life) their children

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**The ego-state and some typical expressions**

- **Words**: ohh; i didn’t do it; no!!; you must be joking!; Why me?; I won’t take that; quit that!; you’re nuts!; that’s none of your *$!#ing business!
- **Voice**: defiant, demanding, moody, loud, grumbling
- **Gesture, mimicry, attitude**: Closed up, chin and lips forward, sprawled, stamping, pouting, sticking the tongue out, refusing, protesting

- **Words**: Great!, nice!, *$!#ing great!; I need...; I don’t like ...; I’m angry,
- **Voice**: loud, free, energetic
- **Gesture, mimicry, attitude**: Laughing, air-kissing, direct anger, crying, bright-eyed, open mouth, lively, excited, relaxed, playful, spontaneous,
- Curious, expressing feelings

- **Words**: thank you, please, perhaps, I hope so, i would like to..., I don’t know, I’ll try, that’s unfair, it’s always me...
- **Voice**: monotone, humble, tearful, soft, pleading
- **Gesture, mimicry, attitude**: restrained, sad, pouting, closed, dejected, hanging shoulders, downcast glance, crossed arms and legs, shrugging, shy, fearful, gives in easily

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II. Parent Ego State

- Incorporates the attitudes and behaviors (dos, shoulds, and oughts) of parental figures.
- Outwardly expressed through prejudice – the part of the person that finds fault, displays prejudices, disapproves of others, and prevents others from feeling good about themselves.
- Consists of two subdivisions:
  - **the Loving and nurturing parent** – the part of the person that comforts, praises, and aids others.
  - **the critical parent** (overly Critical-Critical parent) – the part of the person that finds fault, displays prejudices, disapproves of others, and prevents others from feeling good about themselves.
The ego-states and some typical expressions

**Critical Parent (cP)**

- **Words:** you should, must, never; you cannot do that; that’s childish; everybody knows that; how could you?; proverbs, idioms, moralising comments
- **Voice:** sharp, decisive, strained, impatient, patronising, dressing-down
- **Gesture, mimicry, attitude:**
  - Point-finger arouse, eyebrow high, head trembling, shoulders stiff;

**Nurturing Parents (nP)**

- **Words:** good, nice, lovely, you poor,
- **We’ll arrange/ manage this, what kind of wishes do you have?, can I help you? Don’t worry, don’t get angry, ...**
- **Voice:** with love, smooth, comforting, attentive, soothing
- **Gesture, mimicry, attitude:**
  - Body towards the receiver, arms are moving towards the r., stroking the other’s hair, with understanding, ...
- Critical parent is opposed to natural child.
- Critical parent activates the Adapted Child.
- Nurturing parent is supportive to natural child.
- It is possible to fight your Critical Parent (also called Pig Parent).

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Adult Ego State

- Not subdivided or related to a person’s age.
- The objective, thinking, data-gathering part of the person.
- The adult is rational and organized.
- Has no emotions – able to detach from feelings.
- Logical.
The ego-states and some typical expressions

- **Adult (A)**

- **Words**: what, why, how, where, who; correct; practical; what are the facts?; What follows?; What is necessary, what fits?; I conclude …

- **Voice**: objective, balanced, correct, monotone

- **Gesture, mimicry, attitude**: thoughtful, observant, open, eye contact, upright, open-minded, interested, perceptive, testing, concentrated

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Look at the sentences below and match the ego state to the sentence.

1. It’s not my fault my drink got spilt on your new carpet
   - CHILD
2. I wonder what might have caused that accident
   - ADULT
3. For goodness sake, clean up that mess.
   - ADULT
4. Shall we clean up the mess together with a wet cloth?
   - PARENT
5. I refuse to get involved in this incident.
   - PARENT

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ineffective modes

- **Negative Controlling Parent** - communicates a "You're not OK" message, and is punitive.

- **Negative Nurturing Parent** - communicates a "You're not OK" message. When in this mode the person will often do things for others which they are capable of doing for themselves. When in this mode the person is engulfing and overprotective.

- **Negative Adapted Child** - expresses an "I'm not OK" message. When in this mode the person over-adapts to others and tends to experience such emotions as depression, unrealistic fear and anxiety.

- **Negative Free Child** - in this mode the person runs wild with no restrictions or boundaries. In this mode they express a "You're not OK" message.
effective modes

- **Positive Nurturing Parent** - communicates the message "You're OK". When in this mode the person is caring and affirming.

- **Positive Controlling Parent** - communicates the message "You're OK". This is the boundary setting mode, offering constructive criticism, whilst being caring but firm.

- **Positive Adapted Child** - communicates an "I'm OK" message. From this mode we learn the rules to help us live with others.

- **Positive Free Child** - communicates an "I'm OK" message. This is the creative, fun loving, curious and energetic mode.
• **Accounting mode** - communicates "We're OK" messages. The Adult is able to assess reality in the here and now.

• When the Accounting mode is in the executive position it is possible to choose which of the other effective modes to go into, dependent on the situation. This is then called Accounting Mode.

• When using the descriptive behavioural model the term Accounting Mode helps to differentiate it from the structural model where it is referred to as Adult.

• When stable in this Accounting Mode we are taking account of the present context and situation and deciding the most appropriate mode to come from.

• We are then able to respond appropriately rather than flipping into archaic or historic ways of being, thinking and behaving which are likely to be inappropriate and unhelpful.
II. The TA-model of communication (Transactional analysis)

- is a model of human communication – discovered from Eric Berne - in which the basic element is a transaction a signal from one person – it doesn’t matter if it’s verbal or non-verbal – and a response from another person.

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From Watzlawick we know, that you cannot have no communication:

1. you are sending signals if you are aware of it or not.
2. That is why it is so important to be able to notice,
   a) who is sending
   b) what kind of signals to you
   c) what you are sending to another person.

Within the transactions we send

1. well-liked signals as praise, appreciation, comforting
2. negative signals like criticism, suffering words, and reproach.

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Transactional Analysis

- May occur on three levels:
  - Complementary Transaction
  - Crossed Transaction
  - Ulterior Transaction
Communication can continue between ego states as long as transactions are parallel.
Whenever a crossed transaction occurs it caused a disruption of communication.
In the TA model there are three patterns of transactions:

1. Parallel = complementary transaction
2. Crossed transaction
3. Transaction “under the carpet”
Both persons are operating from the same ego state (child: child) or from complementary ego states (parent: child or adult: parent).
Complementary Transaction

- between Adult and Adult
- Adult to adult
- Parent to Parent
- Parent to Child
Complementary Transactions

• This is a complementary transaction because the employee accepts the child ego state assigned to him by the manager and responds in child ego state.

- "You’re three hours late, I want an explanation."
- "I’m really sorry, I slept through the alarm, it won’t happen again, I promise."

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Example 1

- A: "Have you written the report?"

- B: "Yes - I'm about to email it to you."
Example 2

• A: "Would you like to skip this meeting and go watch a film with me instead?

• B: "I'd love to - I don't want to work anymore, what should we go and see?"
Example 3:

A: "You should have your room tidy by now!"

B: "Will you stop hassling me? I'll do it sooner or later!"

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Try your own complementary transaction

With your partner, invent another imaginary interaction which starts with either child or adult ego state, addressing one of the other person’s ego states and that person responding in the chosen ego state.

Write down the conversation.

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II. Cross (Angular) Transaction

- When three or more ego states are involved
- The transactional response is addressed to an ego state different from the one which started the stimulus
- An inappropriate ego state is activated, producing an unexpected response that disrupt communication.
- When they occur, people tend to withdraw from each other or switch topics.

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Discount Transaction

- One very important kind of crossed transaction
- Here one person completely disregards what the other one is saying.
- Discounts are not always obvious but are always unpleasant

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This is an Angular Transaction because the sales person is talking on more than one level, appearing to address the customer’s Adult ego state but trying to hook the customer’s Child ego state, because the Child is impulsive and may be seduced by the 50% off the iPod and buy it! This is what happens, and the customer answers in Child ego state and buys the iPod!

“Wow, that’s amazing – I’ll take one!”

“That’s the latest iPod and there’s 50% off at the moment, if you are interested”
Example 1a:

• A: "Have you written that report?"

• B: "Will you stop hassling me? I'll do it sooner or later!"

This is a crossed transaction likely to produce problems in the workplace. A may respond with a Parent to Child transaction. For instance:

A: "If you don't change your attitude, you'll get fired."

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Example 2a:

- **A**: "Is your room tidy yet?"
- **B**: "I'm just going to do it, actually."

This is a more positive crossed transaction. There is however the risk that **A** will feel aggrieved that **B** is acting responsibly and not playing their role, and the conversation will develop into

- **A**: "I can never trust you to do things!"
- **B**: "Why don't you believe anything I say?"

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Try your own crossed transaction!

- Draw the diagram as last time, but start from either adult or child ego state and invent an imaginary situation where someone does not respond as the first speaker expects.
- Write out the conversation that goes with this interaction and draw the arrows on your diagram.

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III. Ulterior (covert) (hidden) (Duplex) Transaction

- One in which two ego states operate simultaneously and one message masks the other.
- Appear to be complementary and socially acceptable, even though they are not.
- In this transaction people say one thing and mean another.
- They have a social (overt) and a psychological (covert) level.

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A: "I need you to stay late at the office with me." (Adult words), body language indicates sexual intent (Child)

B: "Of course." (Adult response to Adult statement), said while smiling (Child accepts the hidden motive).
This is a Duplex Transaction because the whole interaction is working on two levels. Both people are pretending to address Adult ego state and be in Adult ego state but they are both in Child ego state and want to address Child ego state but can’t because of social norms and manners.

Who are, you’re gorgeous رائع بديع

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Try your own Duplex Transaction

- Imagine two parents discussing their children’s exam results or two children playing families.

- Write out the conversation that goes with this interaction and draw the arrows on your diagram.

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Berne believed that a lot of people get stuck in one ego state more than the other two and that this may be due to early childhood experiences.

His theory was that in childhood we have a life position assigned to us, because of the experiences we have from birth onwards.

He thinks there are four possible life positions:

- I’m not OK, You’re OK
- I’m not OK, You’re not OK
- I’m OK, You’re not OK
- I’m OK, You’re OK

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- Life positions are perceptions of the world.
- They are basic beliefs about self and others, which are used to justify decisions and behaviour.
Life positions (continued)

Berne believes that everyone is born in the same Life Position

I’m not OK, You’re OK

The reason you are not OK when you are born is because you are dependent on others for all your needs. They are OK, because they have the ability to satisfy their own needs and your needs.

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The Ideal Life Position

- Berne says the ideal life position to reach is *I’m OK, You’re OK*, where
  1. you are in a position to satisfy your own needs
  2. are happy that others are able to satisfy their needs.
- However, some people don’t progress to this happy state, they get stuck in either

  I’m not OK, You’re not OK (hopelessness position)
  I’m OK, You’re not OK (one above position)

He says this happens because of the wrong kind of experiences in childhood which result in either
  1. very low self-esteem
  2. too high self-esteem.

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How do life positions affect people’s communication?

- Berne thinks that people’s life positions tend to determine the ‘script’ (life plane) of their life.
- If you think the world is against you “I’m not OK, You’re not OK”, you will tend to make this a self-fulfilling prophecy. Your ‘script’ will be a negative one, which makes:
  1. your communication with others negative and makes negative things happen.
  2. Your non-verbal communication may be aggressive or withdrawn,
  3. your words may be the same as non verbal communication.

- It is a bit like being an optimistic person or a pessimistic person.
- How you approach life and encounters with other people, affect how these encounters progress.

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Berne believed that everyone makes a *life script* (life plan خطة الحياة النصي) by age 5. 
- Determines how one interacts with others.
- Based on interpretations of external events.

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Permissions and Injunctions

- **Permissions**
  - **المتاحة**
  - Positive messages given to a child.
  - Do not limit people in any way لا يعقد ولا يحد من الآخرين.

- **Injunctions**
  - **الاوامر الزجرية**
  - Negative messages.
  - More powerful.
  - May become the basis for destructive scripts.

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The recognition that one person gives to another (Verbal or physical) for certain behaviors can vary from actual physical touch to praise. In infants, the main strokes are physical (touch, kissing), and as they grow older, they tend to be more sticky to verbal than physical strokes. Strokes result in the collection of either good or bad feelings, known as stamps. When enough stamps are collected, they can be cashed in on behaviors. Healthy people give and receive positive strokes most often.

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MOST OF US SUFFER FROM STROKE HUNGER!!!!!!!!
Positive Strokes- “I love you”, “you did a good job” - Warm Fuzzies

Negative Strokes- “I hate you” - Cold Pricklies.

When positive strokes are not given, we look for negative strokes rather than be without strokes at all!!

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- We should learn to open our hearts and ask for strokes.
- It makes life easier.
Common Negative Script Patterns

- **Never scripts** – a person never gets to do what he or she wants because the parent forbids it.
- **Until scripts** – a person must wait until a certain time to do something before he or she can have a reward.
- **Always scripts** – a person tells himself that it is necessary to continue doing the same thing.
- **After scripts** – a person expects difficulty after a certain event.
- **Open-ended scripts** – a person does not know what he is supposed to do after a given time.

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Games

- People play games to get strokes to earn recognition. They are dishonest, unfair and unethical in that they are not equal transactions only one person plays and the same person wins.

- Berne felt that people in the life position “I’m not OK, You’re OK” or “I’m not OK, You’re not OK” were people with low self esteem. He felt that these people find it hard to interact with people in a straightforward way so they play ‘games’.

- His definition of ‘game’ was ‘sets of ulterior transactions, repetitive in nature, with a well defined psychological ‘pay off’.

- In other words, an interaction with a hidden motive where one of the participants is gaining something underhand from the encounter.
How do we recognise these ‘games’?

- Games can be recognised by set verbal phrases which tend to be repeated in the conversation. Here are some of the games Berne spotted:
  - “Why don’t you...?”,
  - “Yes but.....”
  - “I’ve got you, you son of a bitch”(clip from English Accent)
  - “Frigid woman”
  - “Kick me”

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نحن "نلعب" دائماً مع بعضنا ألعاباً لاستعراض القوى، وإثبات الذات، وتحصيل المكاسب، وتغيير آراء الآخرين بل وحتى ألعاباً خاصة بالمحبين مثل لعبة القط والفأر...

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أمثلة لألعاب

- هل رأيت نتيجة عملك أو ماذا حصل لي بٍبيك...
- وحاول تنفيذ ذلك إن استطعت...
- وأسلوب الحشر في الزاوية (في المفاوضات مثلا…)
- وشخصية المرأة الدلوعة أو المتمكنّة
- وتوجيهك بطريقة: لو كنت مكانك لفعلت كذا وكذا...
- وانظر كيف حاولت بجهد/ أو صحيت من أجلك...
- والاستدلال المشروط (بطريقة موافق ولكن يجب أولا!)
- وتحريضك بأسلوب: سأخبرك بأفضل طريقة للرد عليه...
- والاعتذار المبطن (مثل: كنت فقط أحاول مساعدتك!)
- والابتزاز المؤدب بطريقة: تُعدني خدمتك ولكنّ لذي طلب
- بٍيط...
- وأخيرا: اطمئن، سأفعل ذلك من أجلك (ولا أنسحك بالاطمئنان لمن يخبرك بهذا!!)

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Example of games

- Why Don't You, Yes But. Historically, the first game discovered.
- If It Weren't For You
- Why does this Always Happen to Me? (setting up a self-fulfilling prophecy)
- See What You Made Me Do

- You Got Me Into This
- Look How Hard I've Tried
- I'm Only Trying to Help You (becoming a neglected martyr)
- Let's You and Him Fight (staging a love triangle)
- Now I've Got You, You Son Of a Bitch (escalating minor disagreements or errors into major interpersonal conflicts)
- A woman falsely cries 'rape' or threatens to; related to Buzz Off Buster, a milder version in which a woman flirts with a man and then rejects his advances

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Game Analysis

- Games - Ulteriorly motivated transactions that appear complementary on the surface but end in bad feelings.
Individuals and Game-Playing (Karpman Drama Triangle)

- Individuals who play games operate from one of three positions:
  - Victim
  - Persecutor
  - Rescuer

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Types of Games

- **First-degree games**
  - Played in social circles with anyone willing to participate.
  - Generally lead to mild upsets.

- **Second-degree games**
  - Occur when the players go after bigger risk.
  - Usually in more intimate circles.
  - End up with bad feelings.

- **Third-degree games**
  - Usually end up in tissue damage
  - The players usually end up in jail, the hospital, or the morgue المشرحة.

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PAYOFFS OF GAMES

- The biological pay-off is strokes
- The social pay-off of a game is time-structuring.
- The existential pay-off of a game is the way in which the game confirms the existential position of each player.
Conclusions from the model

1. Berne found out that some ego-states are more productive for our communication than others (A, nP, fC)
2. The ego-state-model is a good instrument for the analysis of confusing discussion situations and for finding solutions or decisions
3. The model widens the possibilities for making choices
4. It helps me guide my behaviour in a better way
5. Avoid putting people into boxes or categories
6. Become more aware of your own blind spots (that usually stem from adult or child ego-states), e.g. use the Johari window
7. A mature personality is conscious of their current ego-state and is able to change it – depending on the situation – in the interests of positive communication

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