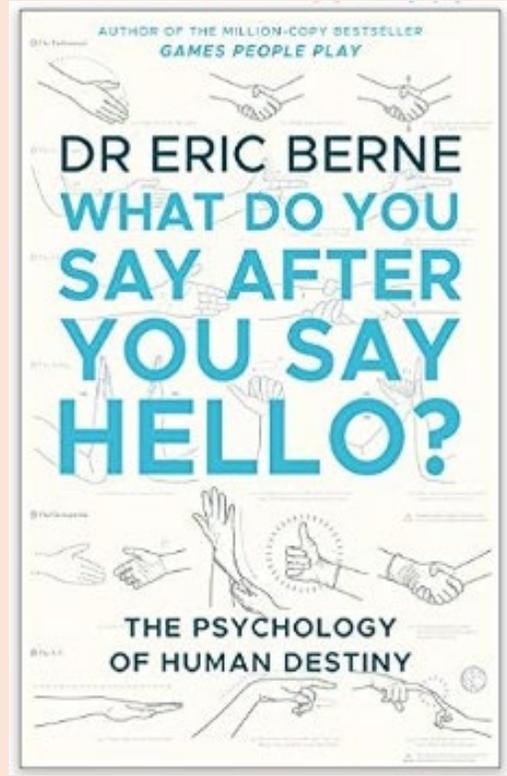
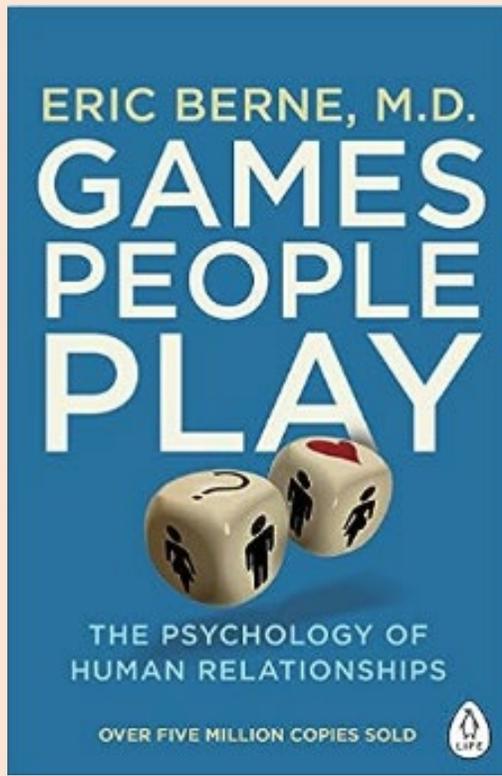
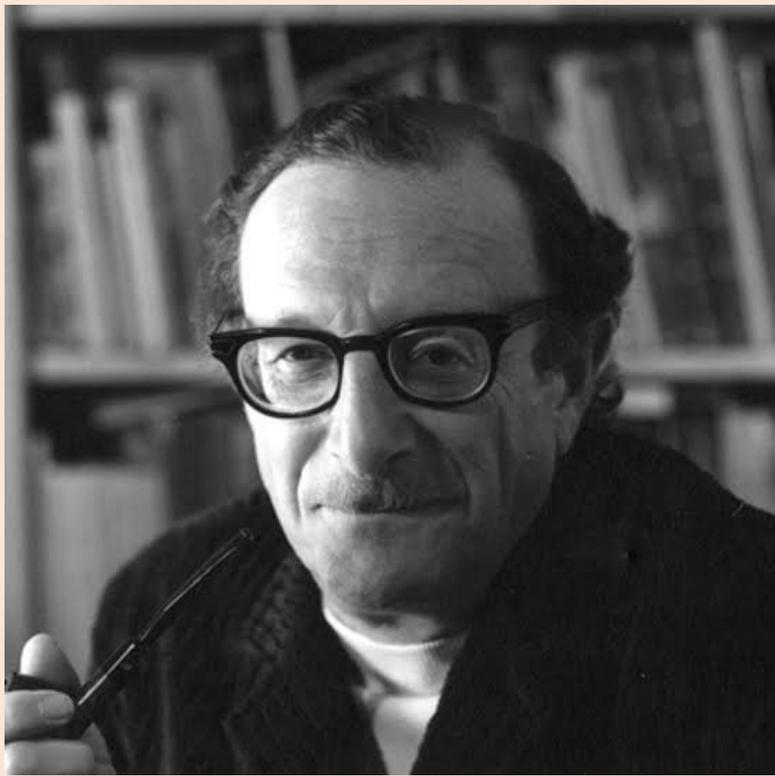




Game on!

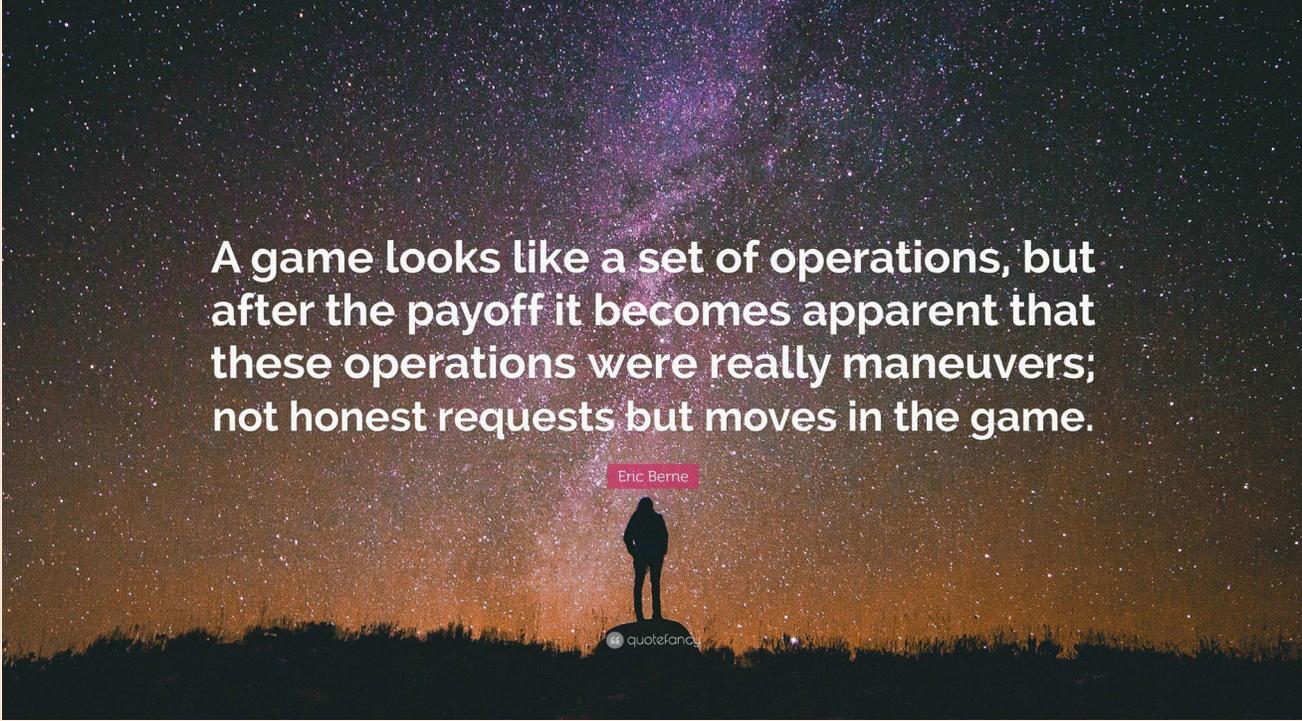
Understanding the Dynamics of Everyday Relationships





Eric Berne
1910 – 1970
Canadian Psychiatrist





A game looks like a set of operations, but after the payoff it becomes apparent that these operations were really maneuvers; not honest requests but moves in the game.

Eric Berne

quotefancy



Everyone carries his parents around inside of him.

Eric Berne

quotefancy

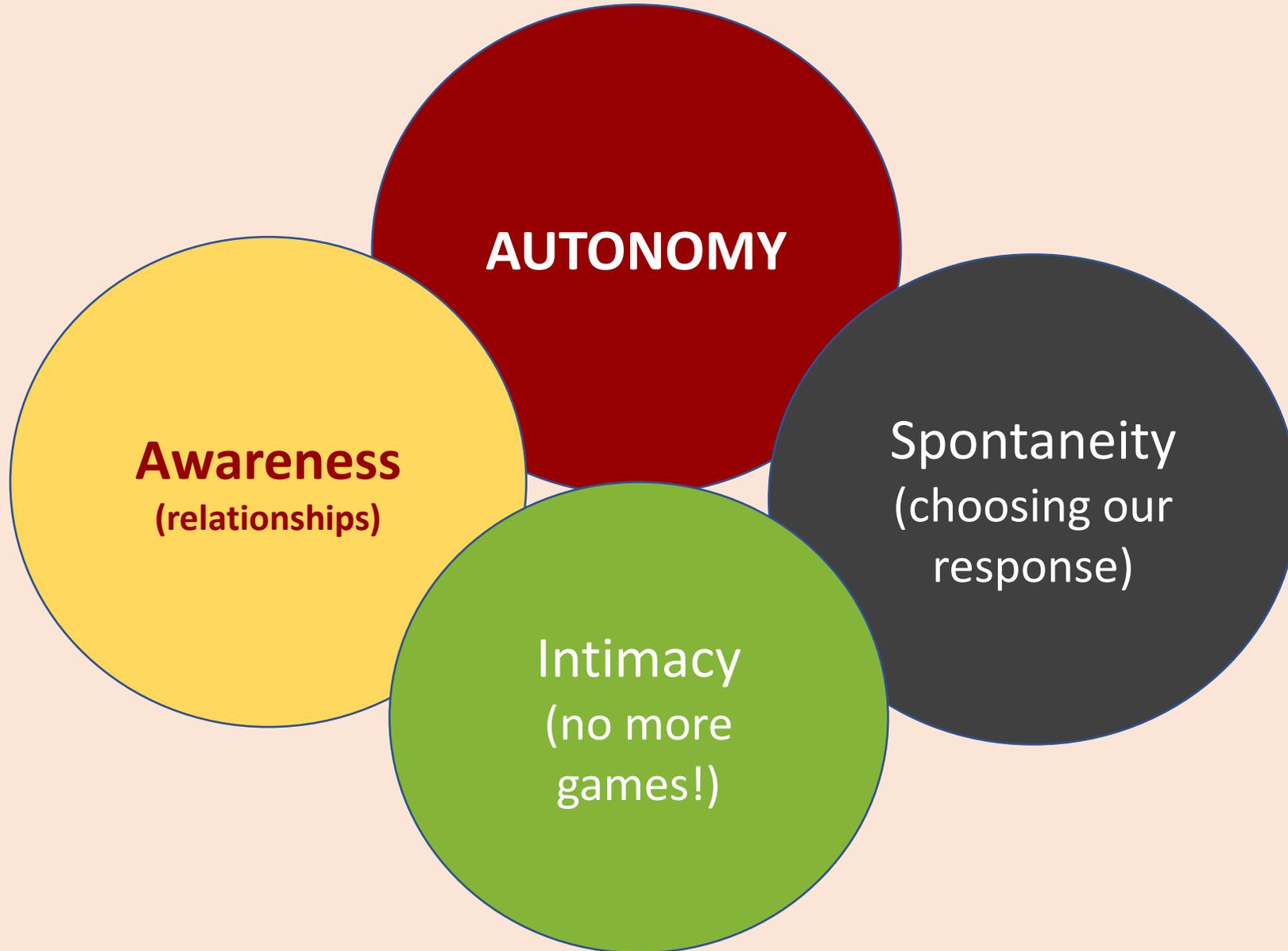


Games are a compromise between intimacy and keeping intimacy away.

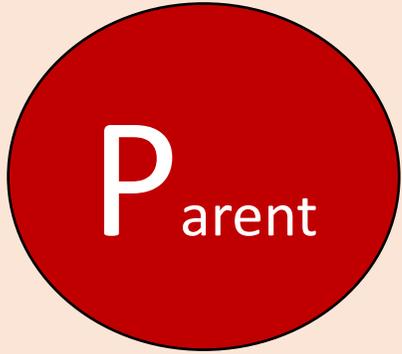
Eric Berne

quotefancy

Transactional Analysis – the direction of travel

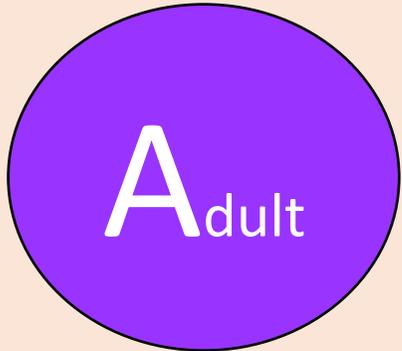


EGO STATES



Parent Ego State

Behaviours, thoughts and feelings from parents or other authority figures.



Adult Ego State

The Adult appraises the environment, seeking to be logical and objective, calculating the possibilities on the basis of past experience; it responds to data and seeks balance.



Child Ego State

Behaviours, thoughts and feelings replayed from Childhood. 'Stuff' from the past which is brought into the present.



Berne (1975) What do you say after you say hello?"

EGO STATES according to Eric Berne

Critical
Parent

Parent

Nurturing
Parent

Adult

Adapted
Child

Child

Free
Child

The Circle of Belonging

You can learn –
and it's ok to
make mistakes!



Structuring Parent



Nurturing Parent

Socialised Child



Free Child



You are loved
and
you are ok!

I understand
the rules,
I am empathic

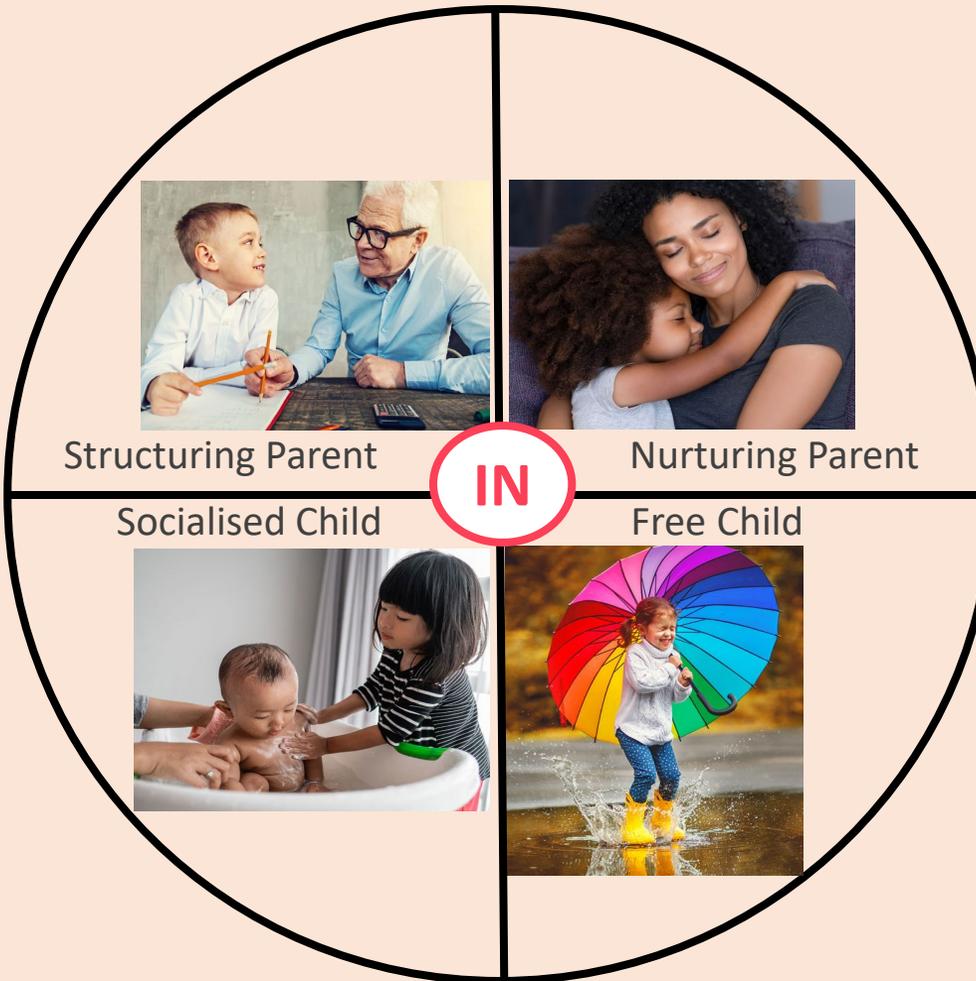
I am worthy
of love, just
as I am!



**Critical, Controlling
Abusive Parent**



**Spoiling, Suffocating
Parent**



OUT

OUT

IN

Structuring Parent

Nurturing Parent

Socialised Child

Free Child

**Adapted Child
Conditional Love**



Hurt Child



Wild Rebel Child



Hurt – Shame - Anger - Rebellion

Healthy Messages



Internalising the Nurturing Parent Voice



**I'm listening
I've got you
You're safe
I'm proud of you
I believe in you
You can do it!**



Internalising the Free Child : The Natural Child



**Unselfconscious
Playful
Emotionally Open
Responsive
Vulnerable**



Internalising the Free Child : The Little Professor



**Curious
Exploring
Intuition
Problem-Solving
Innovative**



Internalising the Structuring Parent Voice



Good Boundaries
Empathic
Socialised
Think of others
Good manners

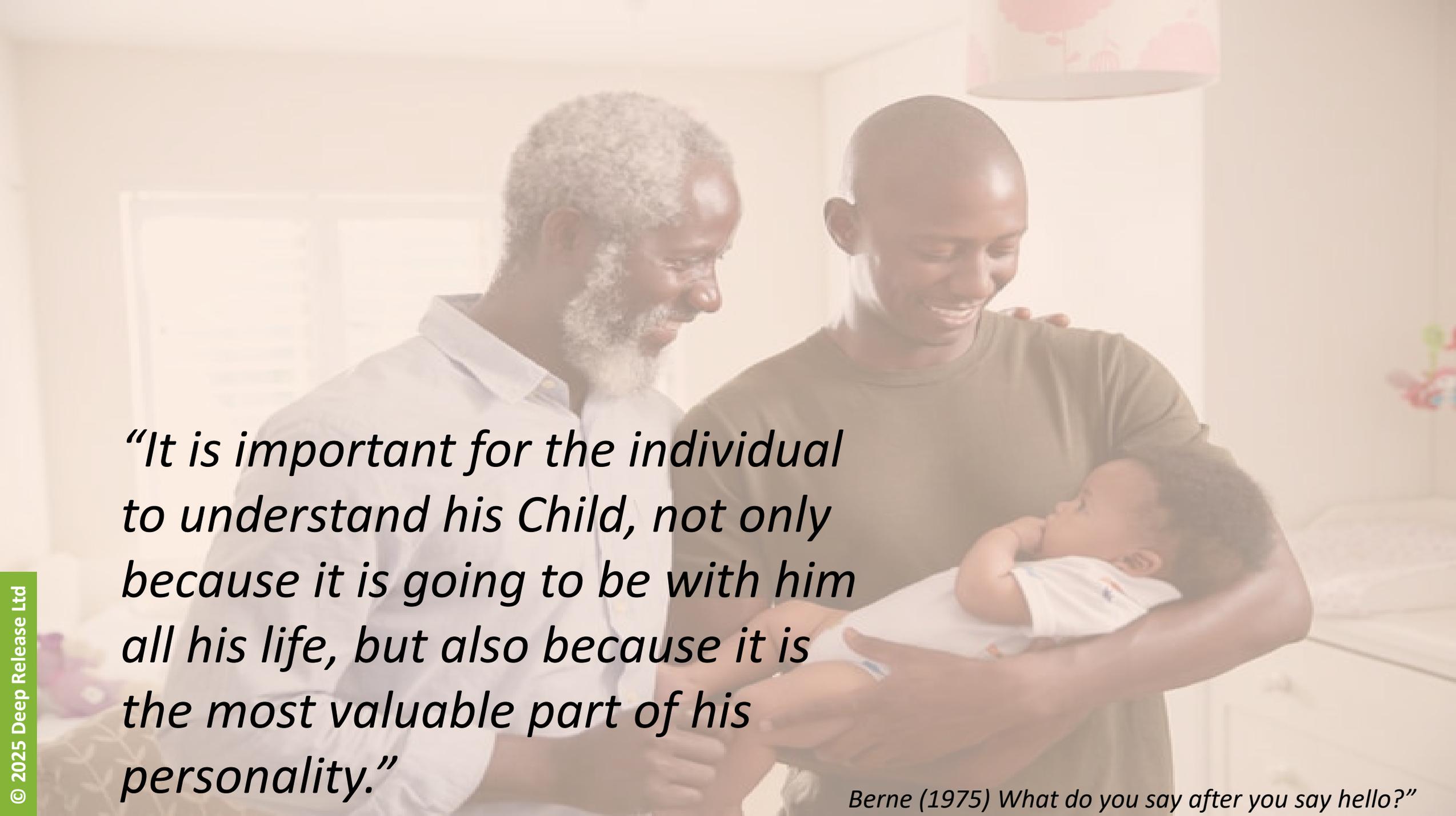


Internalising the Socialised and Nurtured Child



Self-worth and security
Empathy and compassion
Can name feelings
Respectful of boundaries
Optimistic and resilient
Group identity





“It is important for the individual to understand his Child, not only because it is going to be with him all his life, but also because it is the most valuable part of his personality.”

Berne (1975) What do you say after you say hello?”

Unhealthy Messages



Internalising the Critical Parent Voice



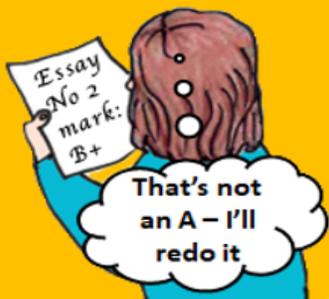
**Stop whining!
What's *wrong* with
you?
I'm ashamed of you!
You don't *listen*!
You're pathetic!
What do *you* know?**



Internalising the Adapted Child Voice



THE PERFECTIONIST



I have to get it completely right

THE SELF-DISQUALIFIER



I was just lucky, they were just being kind...

I must be good
I must be watchful
I must be successful
I must work harder
I don't fit in
Don't let them down

OUT



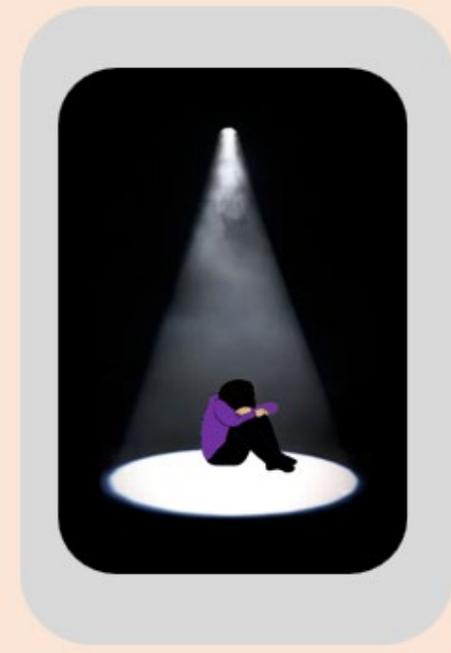
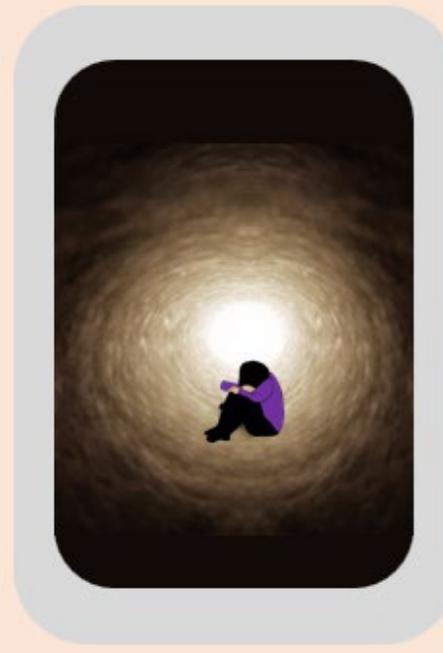
I will never be part of the 'in' group - I don't fit in

THE INNER CRITIC



Messages from the past make me doubt myself

Internalising the Hurt Child Voice



Trusting is scary
There's something wrong with me
I'm ashamed of myself
I'm making a fuss
I'm on my own
I'm a liar



Internalising the Spoiling Parent Voice



**A sense of entitlement
Narcissistic
I am extra special
The world revolves around me
The rules don't apply to me**



Internalising the Rebel Child Voice



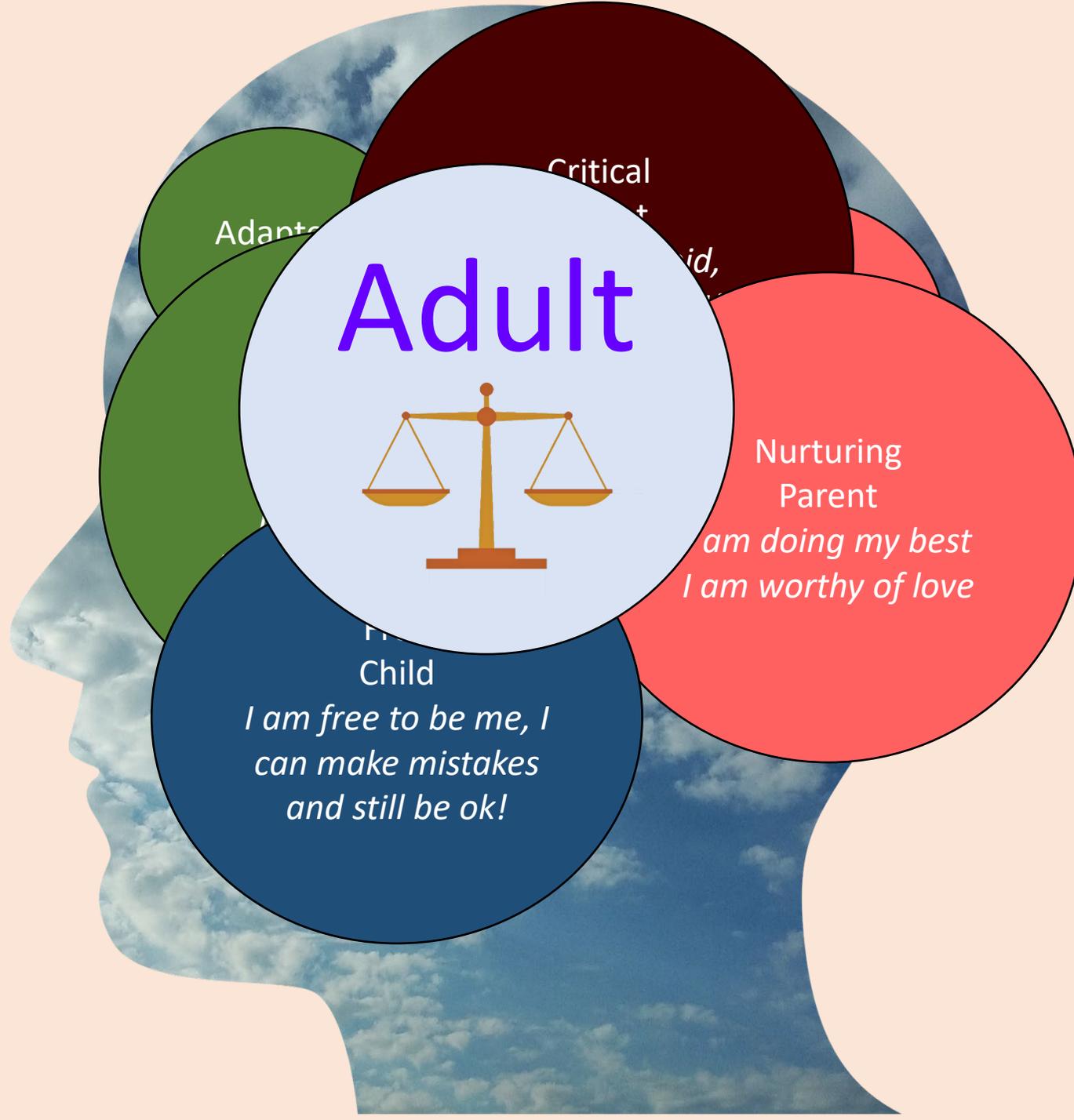
**I'll kick up a storm
I'll shout and scream till
I'm heard
I'll make you take notice
of me**

The Adult ego state doesn't divide. It interacts in the here and now, not from past conditioning, or how other people have told them to be.

While aware of Parent and Child dynamics, the Adult is more open, more rational, less quick to make harsh judgments on a situation or person.

In the Adult ego state, we are more likely to be respectful, make compromises, listen to others, value our own needs and have healthier relationships.





Adult



Nurturing
Parent
*am doing my best
I am worthy of love*

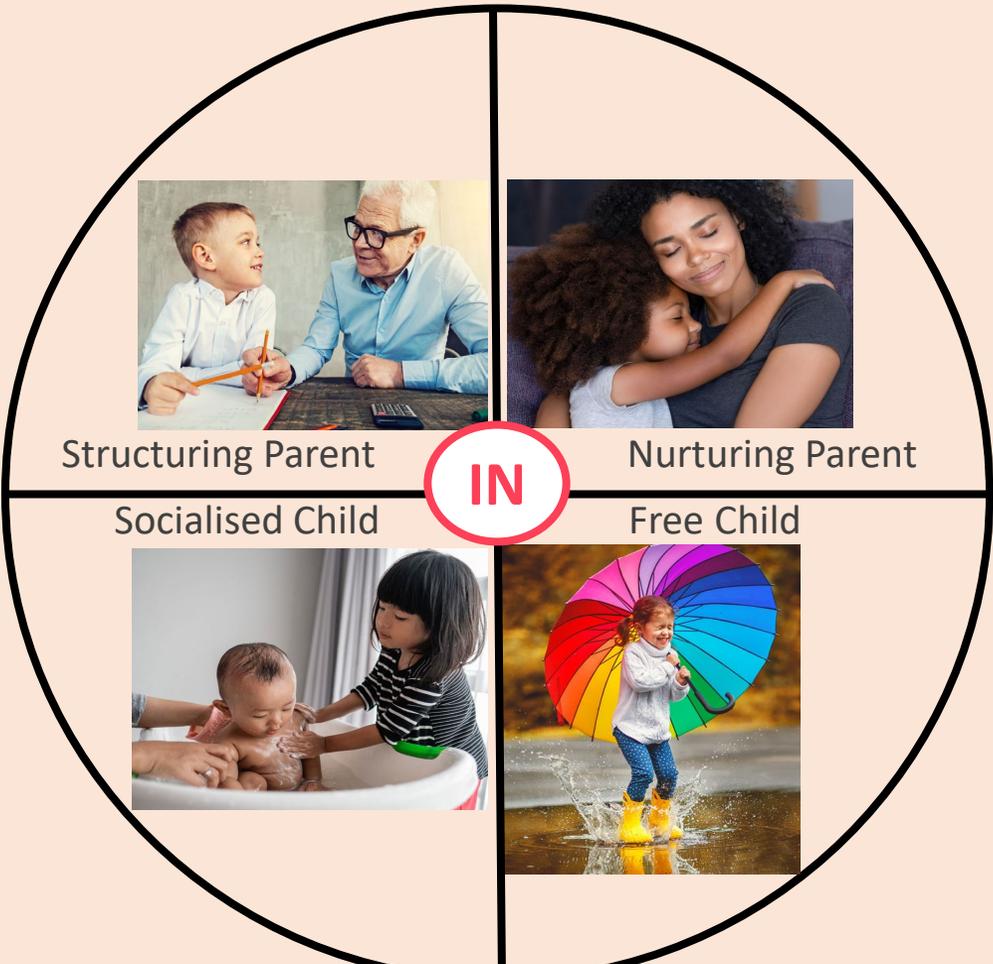
Child
*I am free to be me, I
can make mistakes
and still be ok!*

Adapted

Critical

id,

Why won't you let me in?



LET ME IN!!!!

OUT



Games



OUT

Hurt – Shame - Anger - Rebellion

Share in Buddy Groups

How do you feel when people give you negative or positive strokes?

How easy do you find it to ask for what you need?

15 minutes



TAKE A BREAK



5:00

How do Games Begin?



Rituals

Stereotyped, simple, complementary transactions that are safe, reassuring and help pass the time!

A Hi! How are you?

B Hi, fine thanks!

A Nice day, isn't it?

B Lovely. Apparently it might rain later though.

A Oh well, the garden needs it.

B Here comes the bus!

A I'm waiting for the next one. Take care now!

B Bye!



Rituals and Strokes



A ritual is intuitive. You work out how many 'strokes' you give and how many you should get in return.



The better you know each other, the more strokes you give.

Giving too few or too many strokes can cause discomfort...

STROKES

Eric Berne: *“A unit of human recognition”*

POSITIVE STROKES

Vital in childhood development

*I’m loved, I’m cuddled, I’m fed,
I’m played with, I matter...*

“I’m OK... You’re OK...”

- a genuine compliment
- a pleasant phone call
- a random act of kindness
- a pat on the back





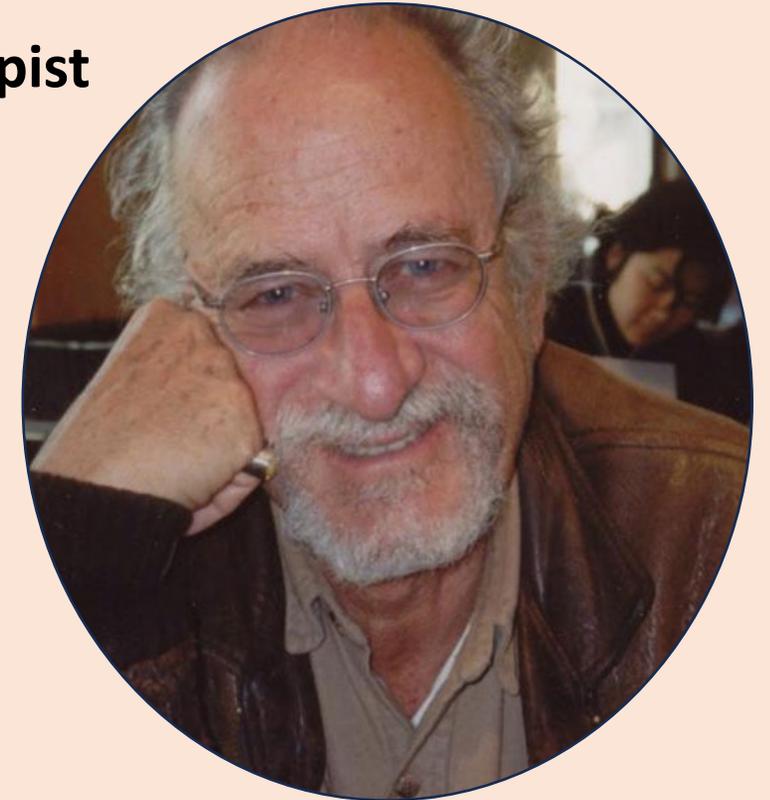
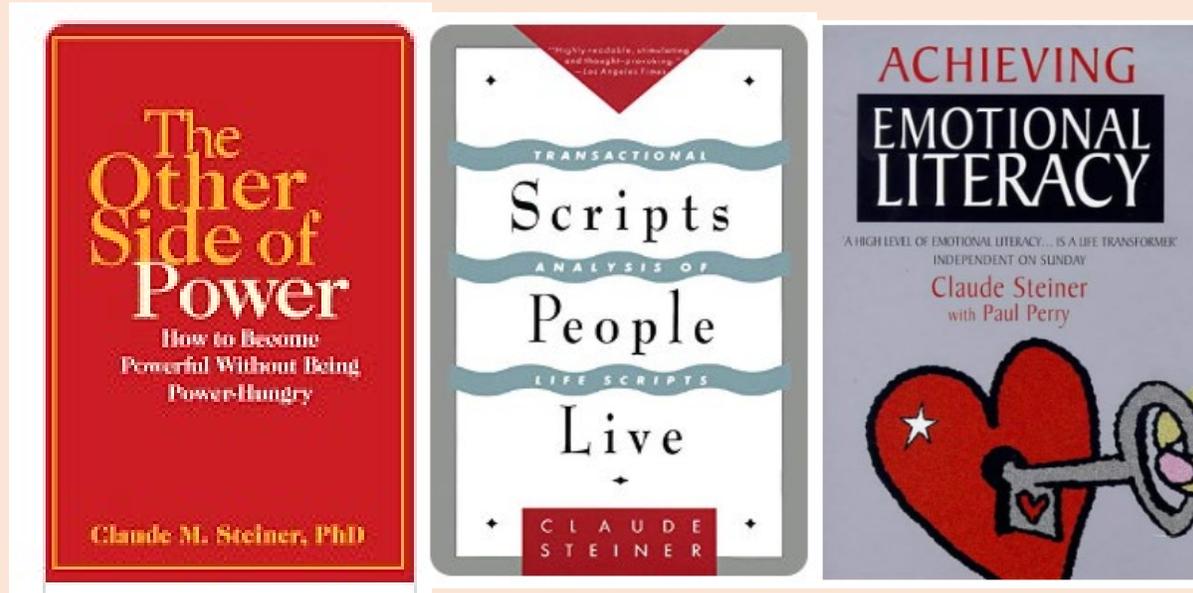
Frank always had trouble picking the exact moment when a business relationship would move from a handshake to a hug....



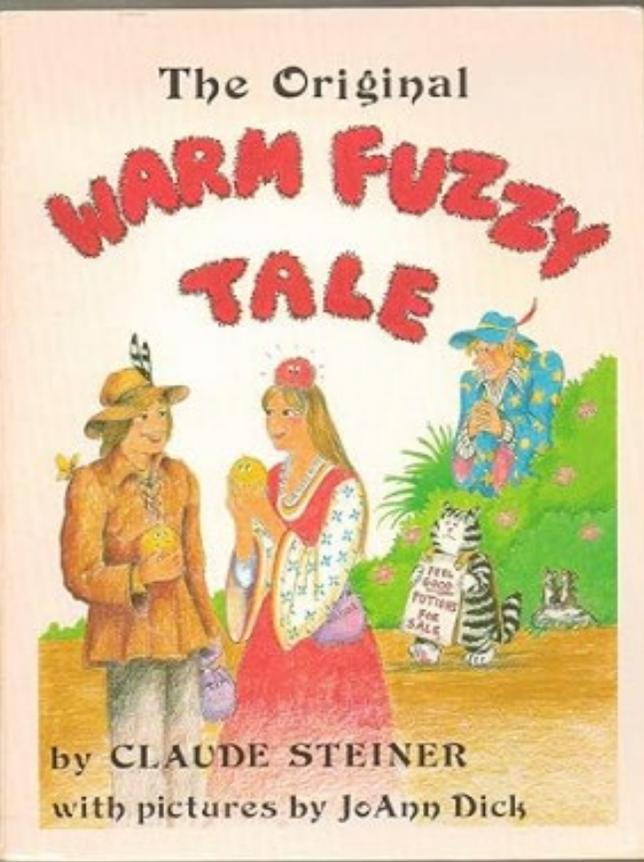
“Games are essentially devious, toxic and sometimes deadly methods of obtaining strokes.”

Claude Steiner PhD

French-born American psychotherapist

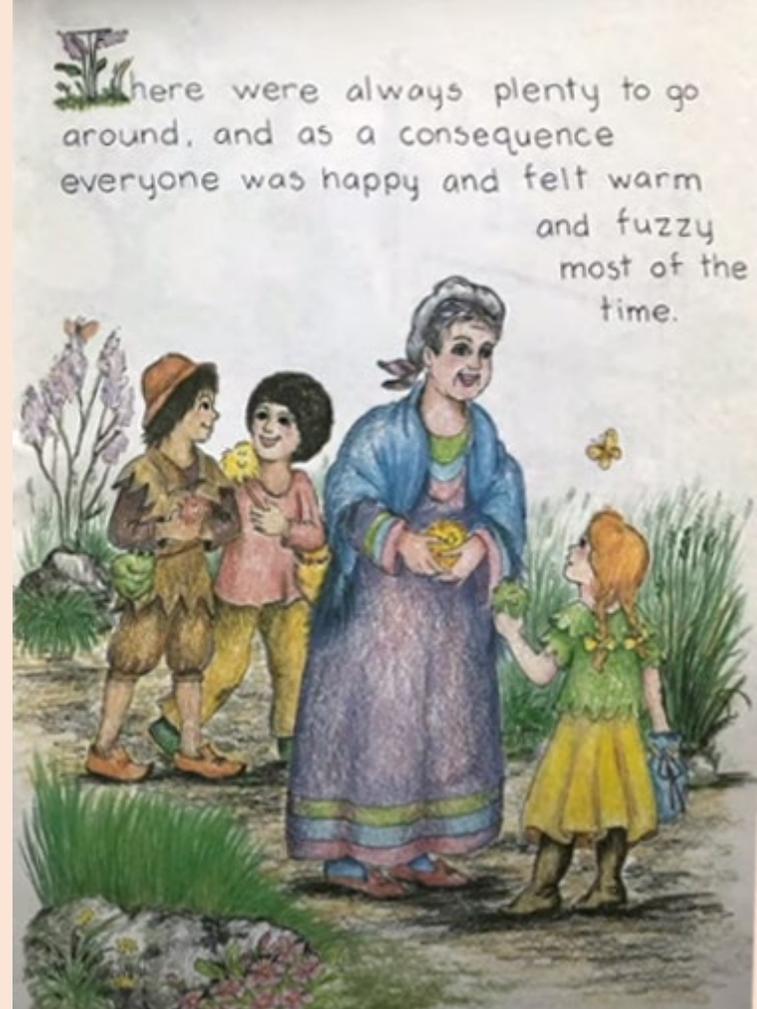
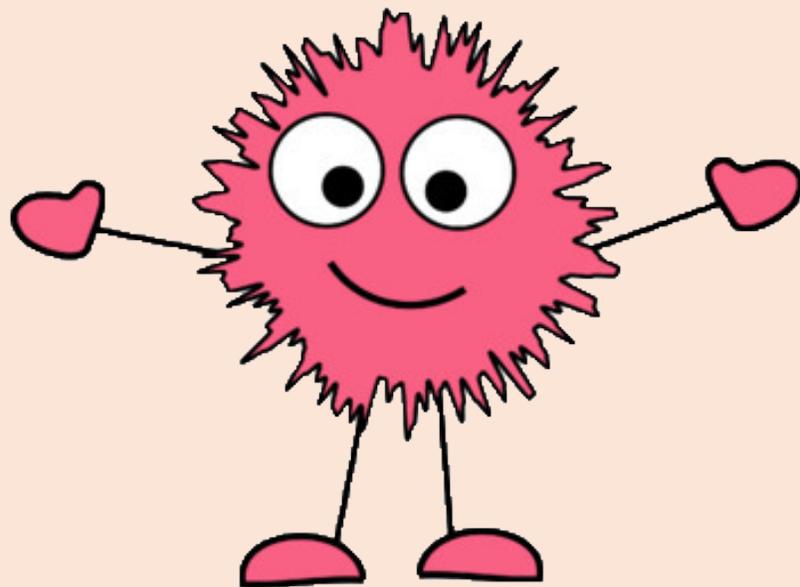


- A desire for intimacy, to be ‘in’, to be valued
- Manipulation results in pseudo-intimacy
- We get what we want by ulterior means



Tim and Maggie

WARM FUZZIES!





Everyone else is getting so many warm fuzzies, eventually they will run out and there won't be any left for you!

...e began to complain every time he saw Maggi giving a Warm Fuzzy to somebody else, and because Maggi liked him very much, she stopped giving Warm Fuzzies to other people as often and reserved them for him.

Tim looks upset!

The witch's plan must be working.

An illustration of a brown mouse sitting on a grey rock. There are yellow and purple flowers around it. The scene is outdoors.

Even though they found a Warm Fuzzy every time they reached into their bag, they reached in less and less and became more and more stingy. Soon people began to notice the lack of Warm Fuzzies, and they began to feel less warm and less fuzzy. They began to shrivel up, and, occasionally, people would die from lack of Warm Fuzzies.



COLD PRICKLIES!

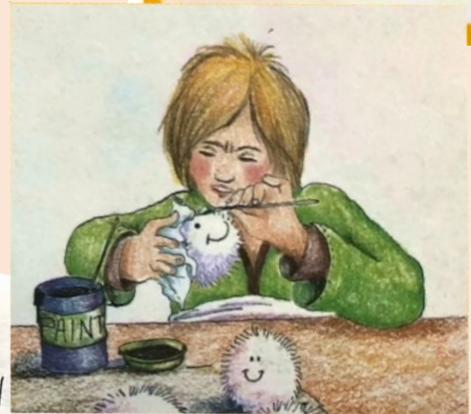
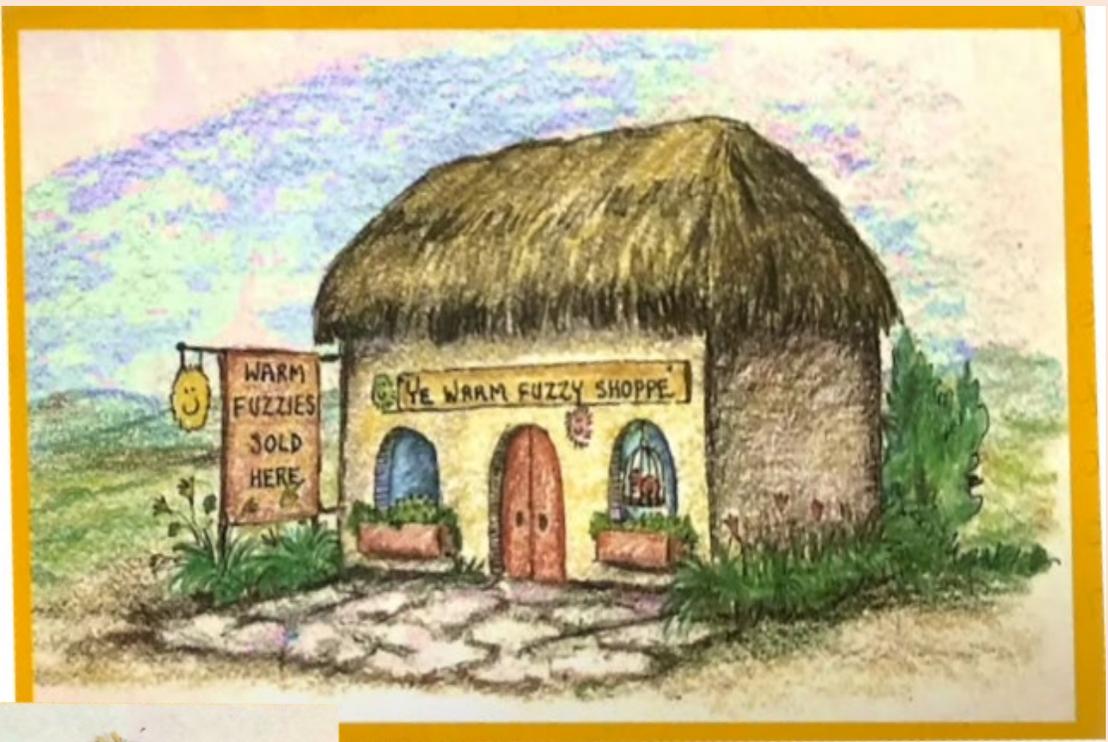
PLAN
B



 everyone was given a bag that was very similar to the Fuzzy Bag except that this one was cold while the Fuzzy Bag was warm. Inside of the witch's bag were Cold Pricklies. These Cold Pricklies did not make people feel warm and fuzzy, but made them feel cold and prickly instead.



 The situation got very complicated. Warm Fuzzies, which used to be thought of as free as air, became extremely valuable.



Another thing which happened was that some people would take Cold Pricklies --- which were limitless and freely available --- coat them white and fluffy, and pass them on as Warm Fuzzies.



The Struggle



Childhood Scripts

“Games can be like worn-out loops of tape we inherit from childhood and continue to let roll. Though limiting and destructive, they are also a sort of comfort, absolving us of the need to really confront unresolved psychological issues. For some, the playing of games has become basic to who we are.”



Deny: *“It’s not my fault!”*

Displace: *“It’s their fault, not mine!”*

Split: *“I’m OK!”*

Project: *“You are not OK! You’re the problem!”*



Blaming & Fault-Finding Games

LOOK WHAT YOU MADE ME DO!



https://youtu.be/RZWf2_2L2v8?si=Mt9a_BSH_7y555vv

THE FENCING MATCH: *“Well, what about you?!”*

Whatever you accuse me of, I can match it with something you have done to me!

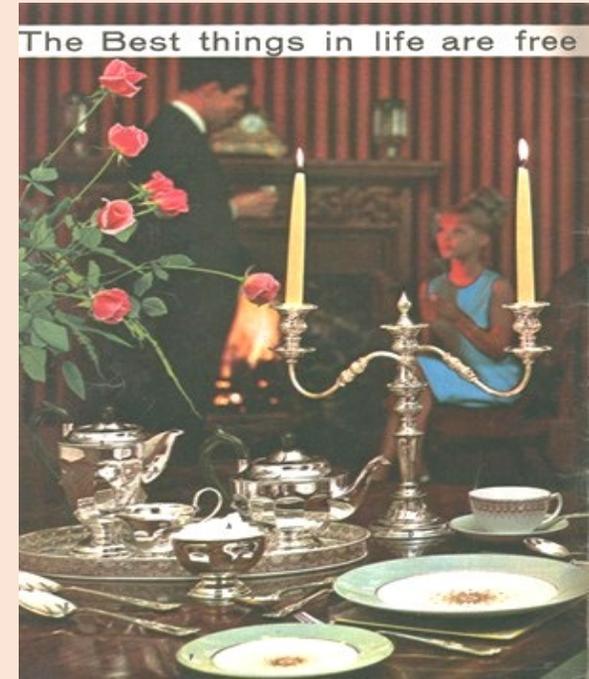
- I am feeling put down and accused, and possibly ashamed, so I need to push back
- I blame you so I feel better about myself



Blaming & Fault-Finding Games

TRADING STAMPS

In the 60s & 70s
rewards for buying eg
groceries or petrol



Regentone 19" television
Longines 9ct Gold watch
Kodak Brownie 8 Movie Camera
Kenwood Chef
Silver Cloud motorboat
(outboard motor not included!)

- 88 books
- 39½ books
- 13¼ books
- 33¼ books
- 170 books



“And another thing...!”



Feelings of anger, depression, jealousy, envy, hurt, happiness, self-righteousness are saved up and redeemed eventually for a psychological prize.

BUT...

We can save up positive stamps for others, or for ourselves!

Blaming & Fault-Finding Games

BLEMISH

However good a job you've done, I'll find something wrong with it...



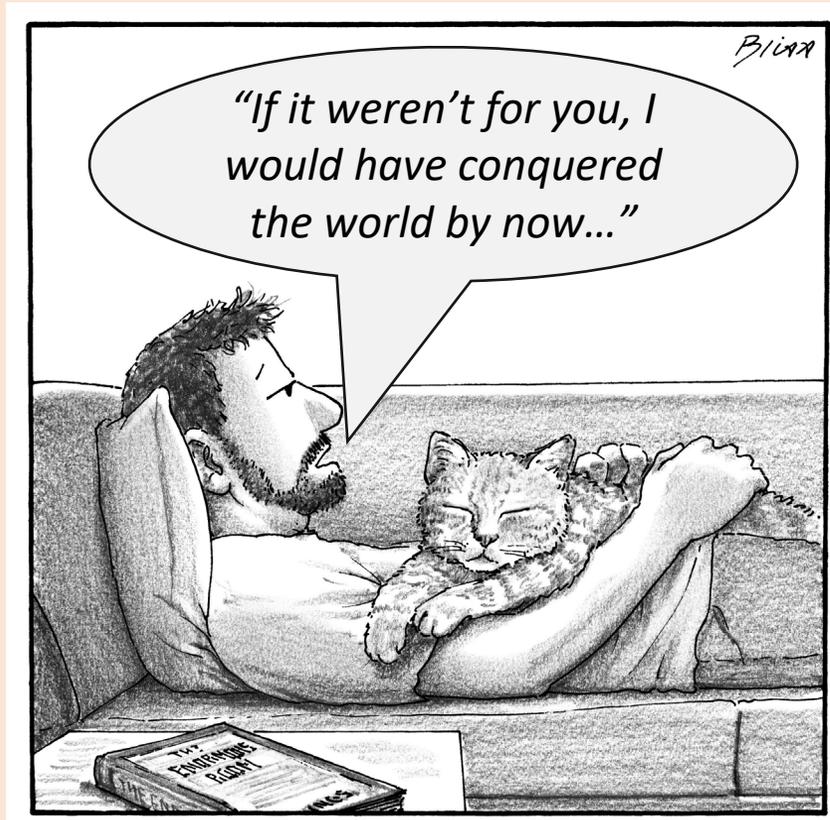
*"How could you just walk out on me like this?
And, by the way, 'nit-picking' has a hyphen."*

I feel bad about myself,
so finding something
wrong with what you
do helps me feel
better...

Blaming & Fault-Finding Games

IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU... (IWFY)

Another person or issue (or cat) is an obstacle to what I really want to do with my life



I don't want to take responsibility for my own fears or shortcomings, so I'll blame it on you...

Blaming & Fault-Finding Games

I'M ONLY TRYING TO HELP!



**I'm a good, kind person and it's
you who have the problem –
you're ungrateful!**

**I need you to feed my ego and
affirm my script that if you work
hard enough, people will love
you.**

Avoiding Games

WHY DON'T YOU, YES, BUT...

Whatever you suggest as a solution to my problems, there is always a reason why I can't do it

- I don't want answers, I want attention and justification for my own inaction
- It also ultimately proves that you, the person trying to give me advice, are inadequate, not me!



How the game might look!



Share in Buddy Groups

Did you recognise yourself or other people in any of the games?

15 minutes



TAKE A BREAK

10
minutes





**Questions
Comments
Discussion**

More Games

AIN'T THEY AWFUL!

- A *bonding game* where two or more people connect through **shared criticism** of an absent person or group.
- It's fuelled by moral superiority and mutual reinforcement: *"Can you believe what they did?"*
- The **psychological payoff** is feeling righteous, clever, or united — without having to confront personal responsibility.



More Games

KICK ME!

Payoffs:

- I'm a victim, so you can't blame me
- Because I'm a hopeless person, it's not my fault
- They reinforce a belief that they don't deserve success



More Games

SWEETHEART

I will put you down (often in public)
but do it so nicely you can't come back at me.



*You're just hopeless with
money, aren't you, my darling?*

*I chose a partner who would
expose my deficiencies and save
me the embarrassment of
having to expose them myself.
My parents used to do this for
me when I was little...*



More Games

TOP DOG

I assert my moral/intellectual superiority:
“I’m right, you’re wrong”.

A parent-child dynamic with a
Pay-Off of feeling powerful,
in control and self-justified.



Performer Roles
KNOW-IT-ALL



*There’s nothing you
can tell me,
I know everything!
Listen and learn.*

More Games

HARRIED

- I try to be proficient in a dozen different tasks or roles, eg mother, administrator, running the home, community work, volunteer...
- These are often conflicting and exhausting roles, but and I take on more and more
- I accept all demands from other people and eventually am likely to collapse and let people down
- It then confirms my core belief that I'm useless and nobody likes me

The player acts out of inadequacy, a need to be valued by others and fear of being seen as a fraud.



How a Game might look

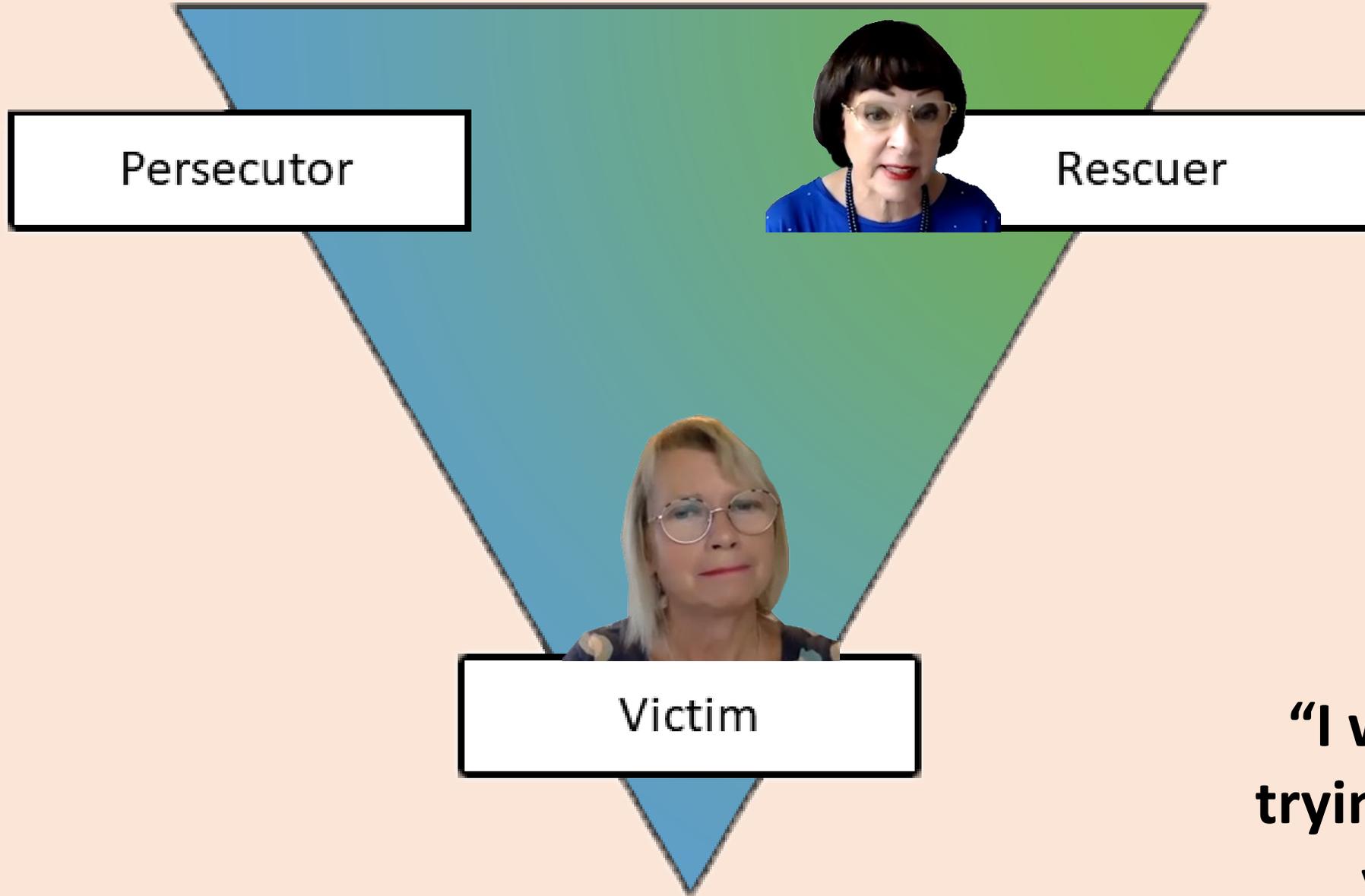


Sarah's Feelings in the Role Play



“I had a genuine increasing anxiety as the conversation went on. Like, this isn’t going the way I want it to, and I felt very uncomfortable. The anxiety built and I felt powerless in that. And then when Brenda disappeared, I just felt like I’d gone down a black hole. I was left carrying everything, holding everything, there was no sharing of responsibility. I was left thinking, ‘what did I do?’, instead of us figuring it out together...”

Beware the Triangle!



“I was only trying to help you!”

More Games

HIT AND RUN (Uproar)

I will hang up the phone, slam the door on you, walk away without explanation – leaving you helpless

Control Roles
TEARS



I break down in tears if confronted or challenged. This makes everyone back off.

Control Roles
FRAGILE

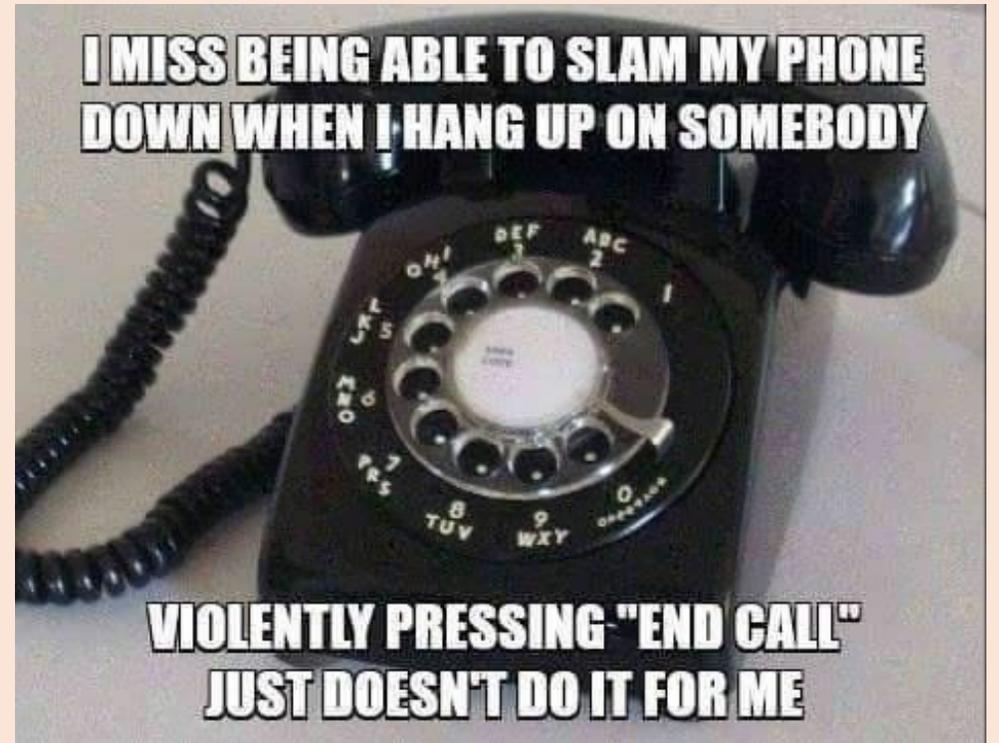
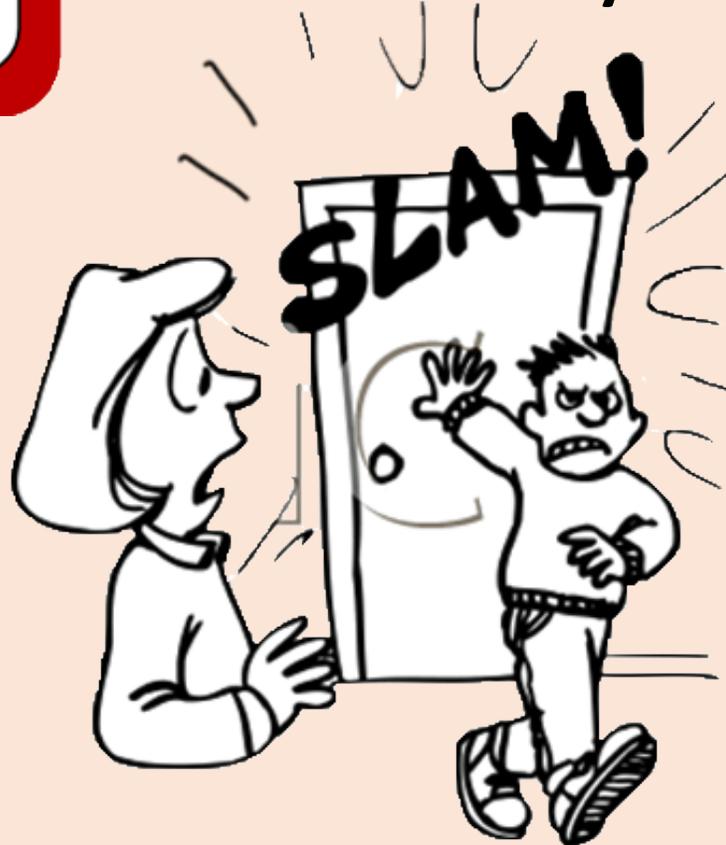


If you challenge or confront me, I'll fall apart.

Control Roles
HEART ATTACK



I let you know that if you do anything that upsets me you'll make me ill/be the death of me.



Part 2: "Come and get me!"

Passive-Aggressive Behaviour

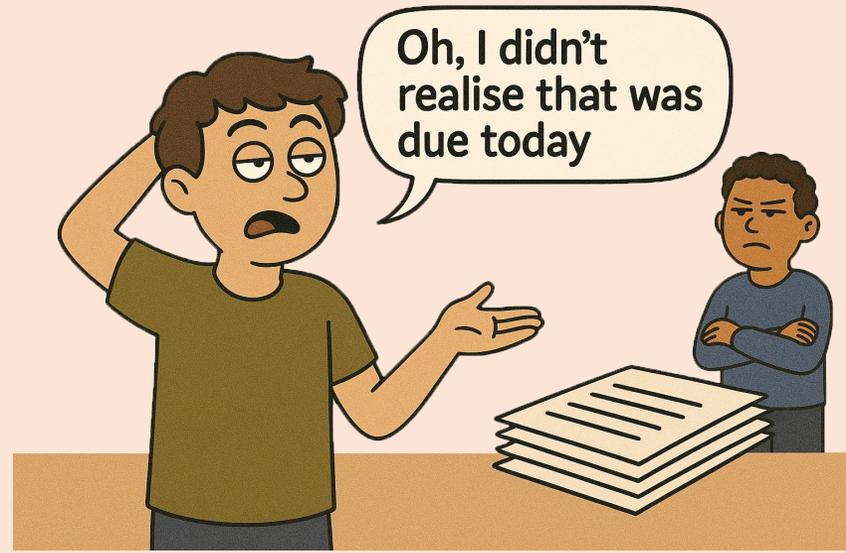
“A type of behaviour or personality characterised by indirect resistance to the demands of others, and an avoidance of direct confrontation”

“The act of being covertly spiteful with the intent of inflicting pain.”

Backhanded compliments



Feigning Ignorance



Indirect Anger



What do you think...?

THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT



Why might someone stay silent in a group?

- Genuinely shy?
- Scared to speak
- Angry?
- Passive-aggressive?

HELPLESS



Why might someone play helpless?

- Genuinely can't do it?
- Low self worth?
- Playing Victim?
- Manipulative tactics?

THE CARETAKER



Why might someone be a Caretaker?

- Genuine desire to help?
- Low self worth?
- Playing Victim?
- Manipulative tactics?

THE BUBBLE-BURSTER



I tell you why your brilliant idea will never work

- Genuinely think the idea won't work?
- Protecting you?
- Jealous?
- Want to steal your idea?

Share in Buddy Groups

Discuss the games – choose someone to feedback your thoughts!

15 minutes



Stopping Playing Games

We can get lost in a game and only realise later that a game was being played.

1. AWARENESS: Recognise the game

Start noticing:

- **Repetitive emotional outcomes**
(“Why does this kind of conversation always end this way?”)
- **Self-examination: *What was my role in the game?***
- **What needs of mine were being hooked into?**
- **Did I need to be understood? How can I express that directly and appropriately?**
- **Were my needs not being acknowledged? Can I say that clearly?**

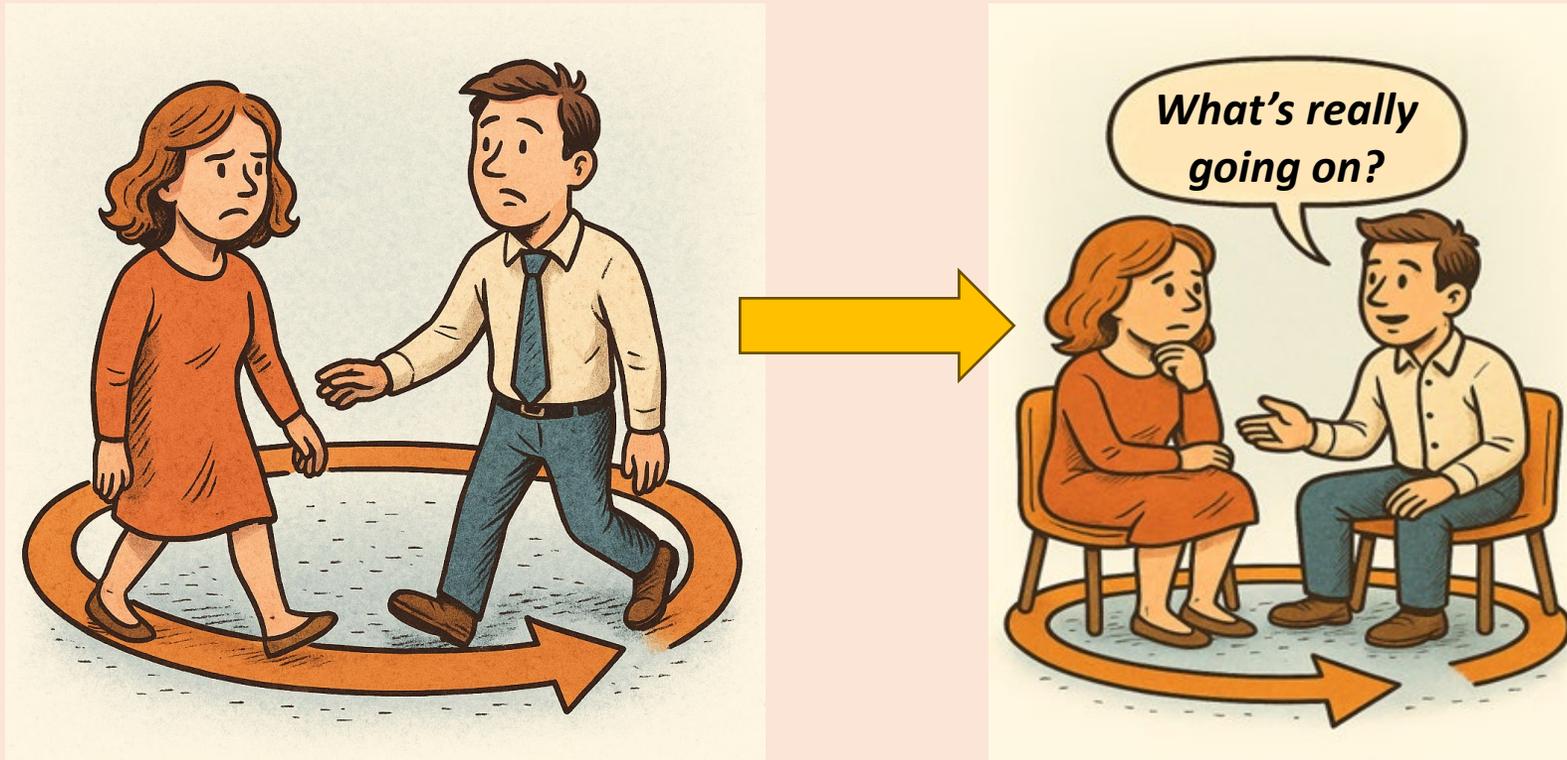
How a Game might look...



2. MOVE TO AUTHENTIC TRANSACTIONS

- Stay in the Adult ego state – factual, present, non-defensive
- Respond to what is actually being said. *Where are they really coming from?*
- If you sense manipulation, *name the process gently*

“I feel like we’re going round in circles... can we talk about what’s really bothering us?”



3. STRENGTHEN INTIMACY AND SAFETY

- Express feelings directly: *“I feel hurt when...”* instead of hinting and withdrawing
- Be curious – respond rather than react
- When trust is built through small moments of honesty which are less threatening, the need for the game fades



4. CHANGING THE SCRIPT

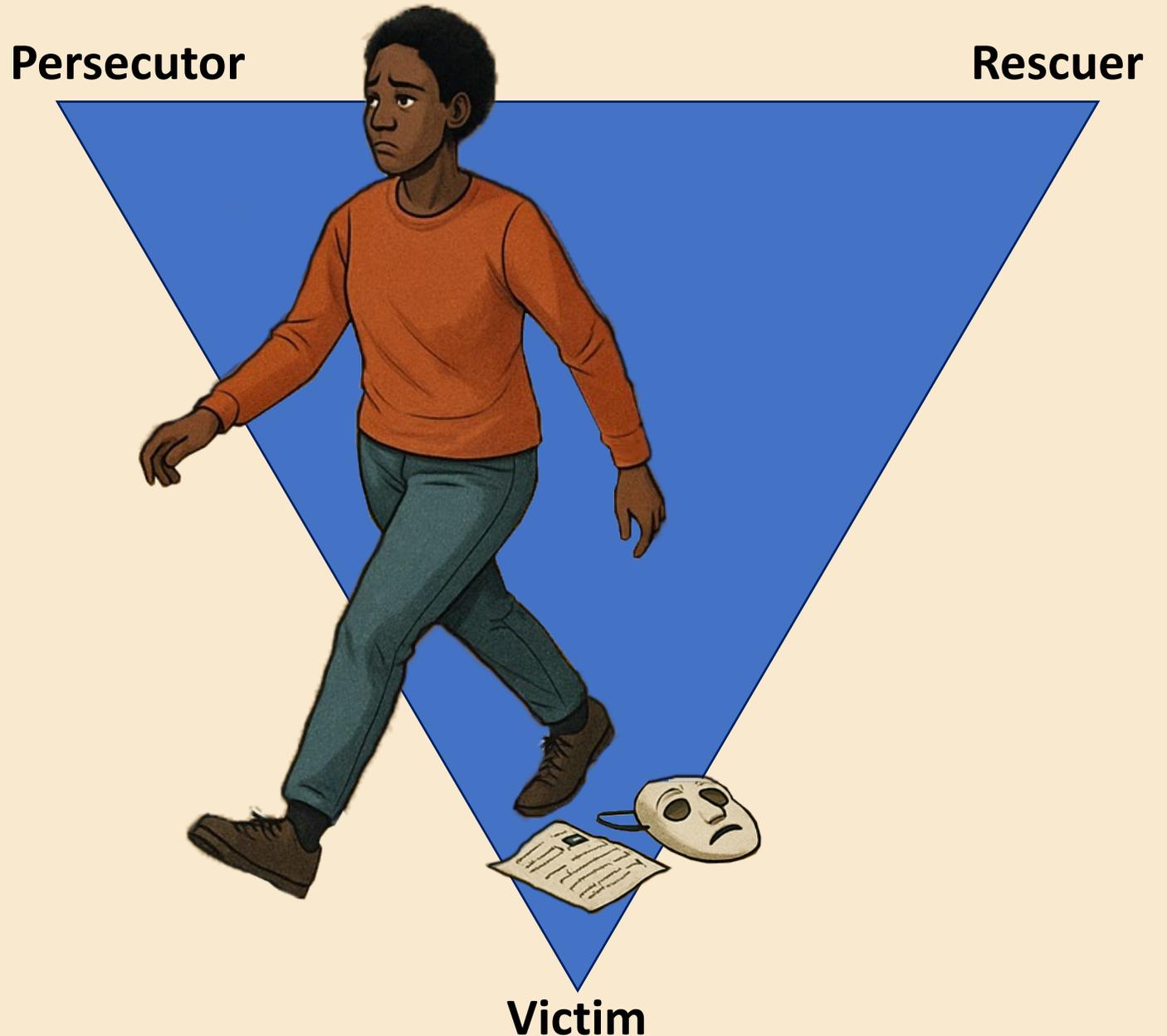
- Games are deeply scripted (often since childhood) and unlearning them takes practice
- Talk openly with therapist/coach/friends about games



Stopping Playing Games

As we become familiar with unconscious games we play, and recognise the tactics we employ, we gain insight and become more self-aware.

We need to step out of the drama triangle!



The Winner's Triangle (Acy Choy, 1990)

Assertive

I state my needs clearly, set boundaries & take responsibility for my actions

Caring

I offer support and encouragement, listen and show empathy & respect your choices

I share my feelings and fears openly and take responsibility for my emotions, open to changing

Vulnerable

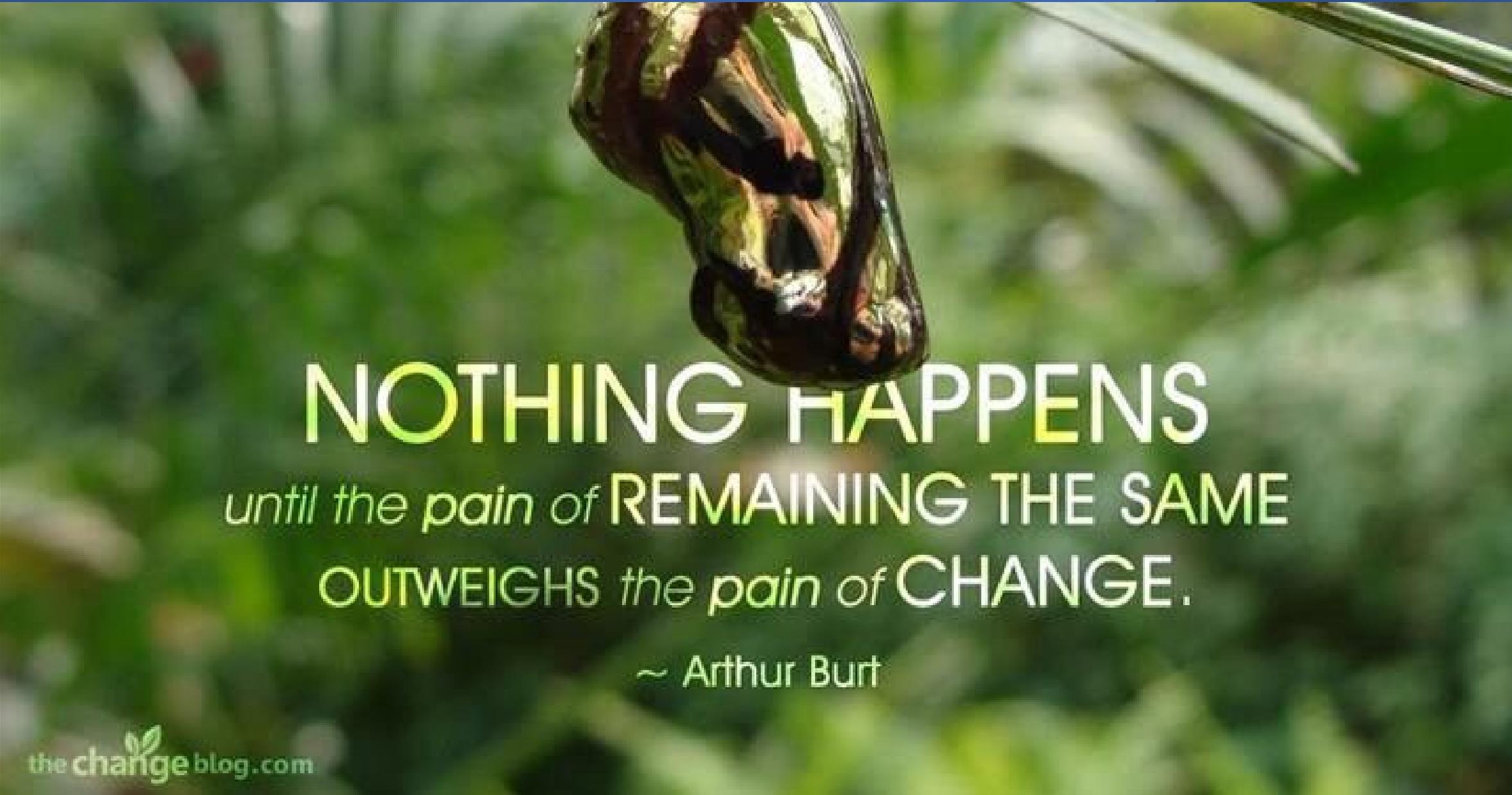
Vulnerable: Instead of being helpless, we acknowledge our feelings and ask for help appropriately. We are open, honest and self-aware about our needs and our limits.

Caring: Instead of rescuing or fixing, we offer empathy and support, without taking over. We are compassionate, but with good boundaries.

Assertive: Instead of blaming or attacking, we express our needs and limits clearly and respectfully. We are direct, self-respecting and non-aggressive

The Drama Triangle is based on fear, control and shame.

The Winner's Triangle is based on honesty, empathy and responsibility



NOTHING HAPPENS

until the pain of REMAINING THE SAME
OUTWEIGHS *the pain of* CHANGE.

~ Arthur Burt

Share in Buddy Groups

*Discuss what you have been watching!
This is also the time to say goodbye – exchange details if required*

15 minutes







Resources

[PACT-RESOURCES.CO.UK](https://pact-resources.co.uk)

ORIGINAL & CREATIVE
COUNSELLING RESOURCES

Coming Next!

NOV
22



(to) 9:30 am - 1:00 pm

When Mothers Wound

DEC
1



(to) 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

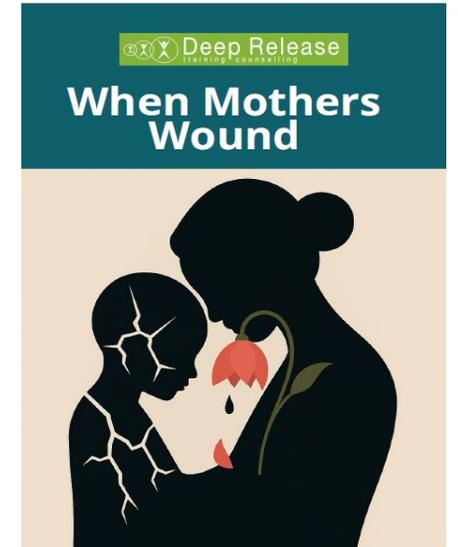
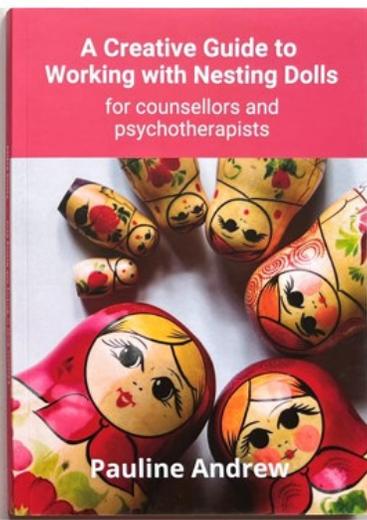
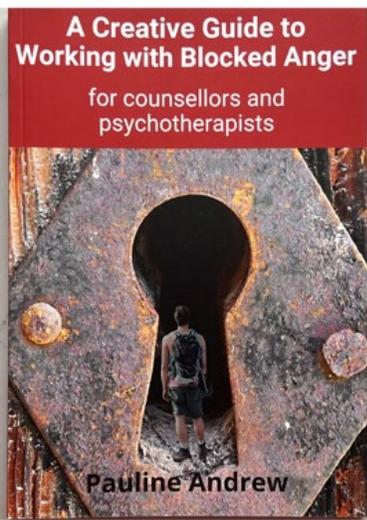
FREE! WebApps Workshop

DEC
9



(to) 9:30 am - 1:00 pm

When Fathers Wound



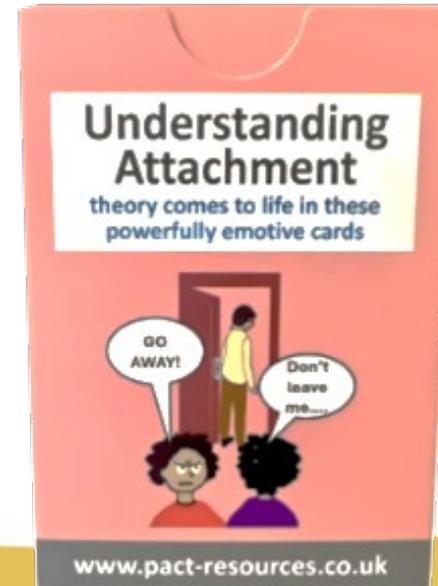
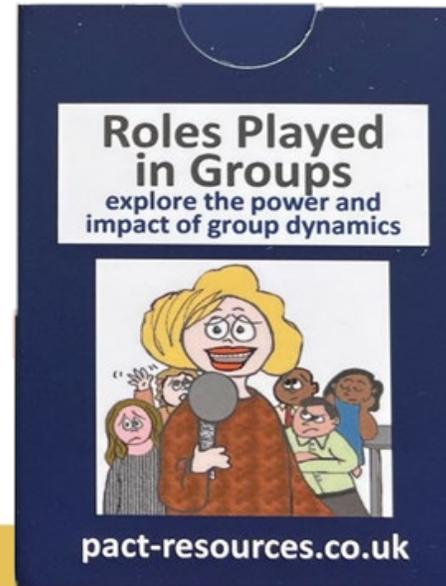
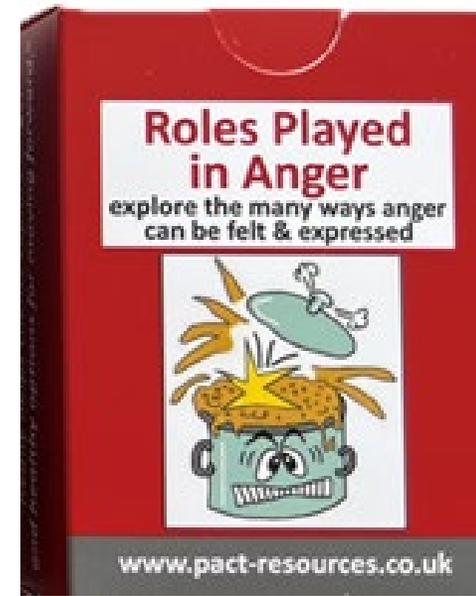
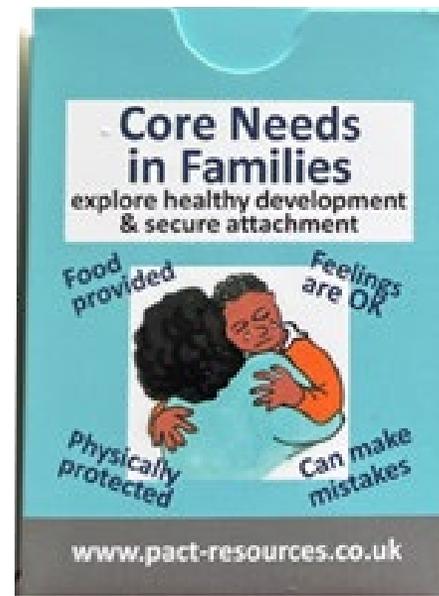
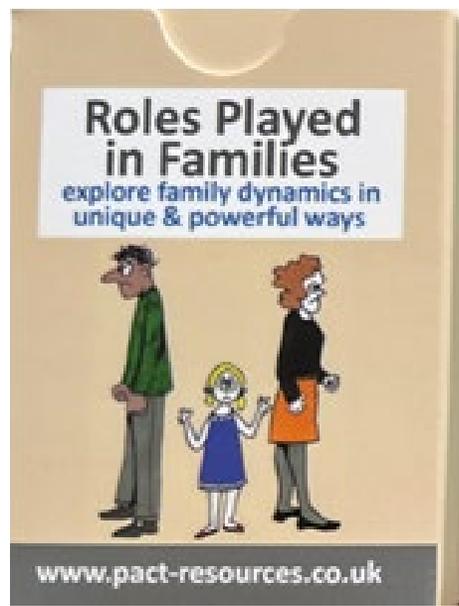
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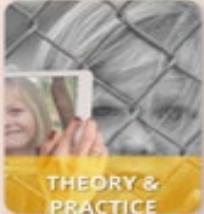
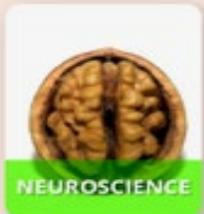
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