



Wellbeing  
& Recovery  
College



Midlands Partnership  
NHS Foundation Trust  
*A Keele University Teaching Trust*

# Effective Communication in relationships

## Session 2

Trainers Jane and Lindsay

# Aims of today's session

This session is around Understanding

- To understand the roles we play in relationships
- To look at the way we interact with others and how they interact with us
- To begin to look at the changes we can make in our communication to improve our interactions with others
- To explore your relationship with yourself





# Introducing TA

- Transactional Analysis (TA) is a framework for analysing the behaviour of both ourselves and other people. It offers some useful insights into the impact of different behavioural styles on relationships between people.
- It was defined and evolved by Dr Eric Berne whose theory was that there existed in everyone three quite clearly distinguishable sets of attitudes and behaviours. He called these ego states, which are 'frames of mind'.
- It is a widely applied model of communication.

# Ego States

- The Ego is our identity, the part of our personality which interacts with the world
- Ego states are frames of mind
- We all have ego states that cause us to react in different ways and see things from different perspectives.

## THE EGO

That **part** of the **mind**  
that always  
looks **out**, to see what  
**to believe**,  
to see **what to do**.



From Poem THE EGO by Maureen Carroll  
Messages From the Love Within [maureen-carroll.com](http://maureen-carroll.com)




Parent

**Parent Ego State**



Adult

**Adult Ego State**



Child

**Child Ego State**

# Parent frames of mind

## Parent Ego State

### Vocabulary:

- Should, don't, must, always, never, now what? Because I said so
- I'll take care of you, poor thing, there-there, come on, give it a try

### Facial Expression:

- smile encouragingly,
- set jaw,
- outthrust chin,
- raised eyebrows



### Tone:

- Sneering, loud, harsh, contemptuous, condescending, punishing,
- sympathetic, encouraging

### Gesture/Posture:

- Pointed finger,
- shaking head,
- arms folded on chest, tapping feet/fingers,

# Adult frame of mind

## Adult Ego State

### Vocabulary:

- how, why, when, where, what,
- alternatives, results, yes, no, caused by, statistics, facts not opinions.

### Facial Expression:

- thoughtful, watching attentively,
- questioning, alert, lively



### Tone:

clear & calm, confident, factual, enquiring.

### Gesture/Posture:

- straight (not stiff),
- lean forward to listen/look,
- relaxed, thinking with hand on chin,
- patient.



# Child frames of mind

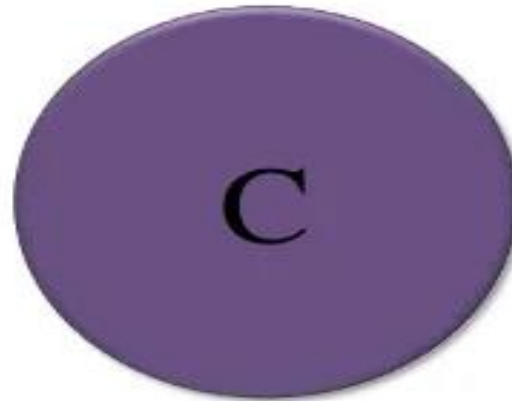
## Child Ego state

### Vocabulary:

- Wow,
- give me what I want,
- MINE,
- I wish,
- I'm scared, help,

### Facial Expression:

- tears, pouting, downcast or uplifted
- eyes, tilted head, wide-eyed, fluttering
- eyelashes, flirtatious, admiring



### Tone:

- giggle, chuckle, whine, swear, yell,
- fast & high-pitched, whistle, playful,
- ask permission.

### Gesture/Posture:

- slumped,
- curled up,
- putting up hand to ask question



autocratic, fault-finding,  
dismissive

**CONTROLLING**

constructive,  
organising, firm



smothering, invasive,  
overprotective

**NURTURING**

supportive,  
compassionate, caring



fearful, rebellious,  
compliant

**ADAPTED**

accommodating,  
assertive, co-operative



egocentric, wild,  
inconsiderate

**FREE**

creative,  
curious, playful



# Scenario

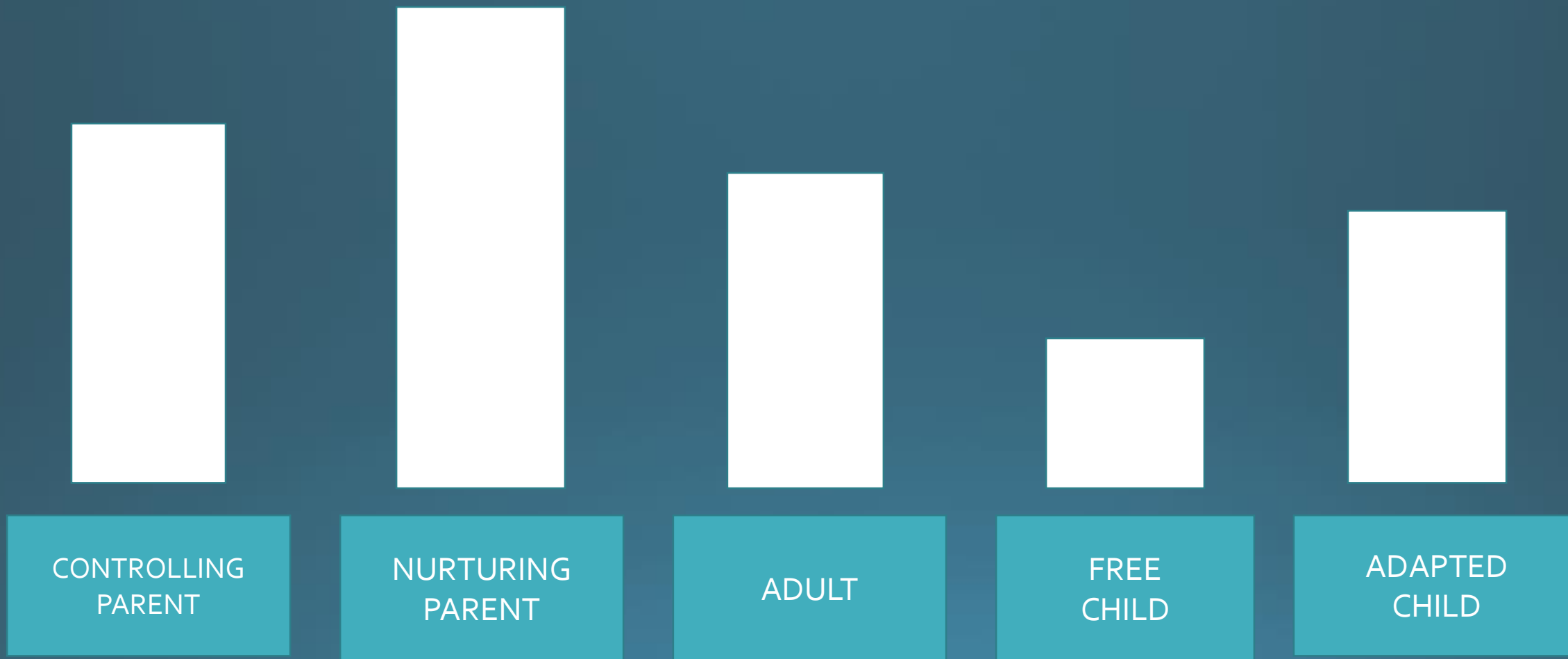
Alison goes out and doesn't let Mark know when she's coming home. Her phone is off, she then comes home late and has missed the meal Mark cooked for her

Mark says 'I've been waiting for you, you're late' (Negative Tone and Body Language)

Alison says 'I'm not a Child, I don't have to let you now my every move'

- What are the reactions ? Critical Parent, Adult, Adapted Child?
- What is the likely outcome of the interaction?

# EXAMPLE EGO GRAM



**Your relationship with  
yourself determines the  
quality of the relationships  
you can create with others.**





# Your relationship with yourself

- What do you do for fun/freedom in your life ? (Free child time)
- How do you care for yourself ? (Parent Yourself)



# Balancing parent and child states



# Home Practice

- Bring awareness and understanding to your interactions
- Reflect on your own traits in the different ego states
- Have a go at bringing new activities in.