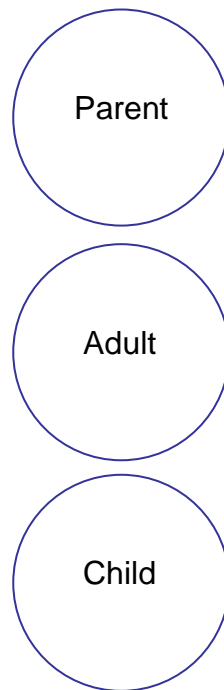


Transactional Analysis

Transactional Analysis, founded by Eric Berne in the 1960's, is one model of communication that can provide useful insights into ourselves and how we communicate with others. The core idea is that we can think of ourselves as having three parts to our personality, our 'ego-states'; parent, adult and child.



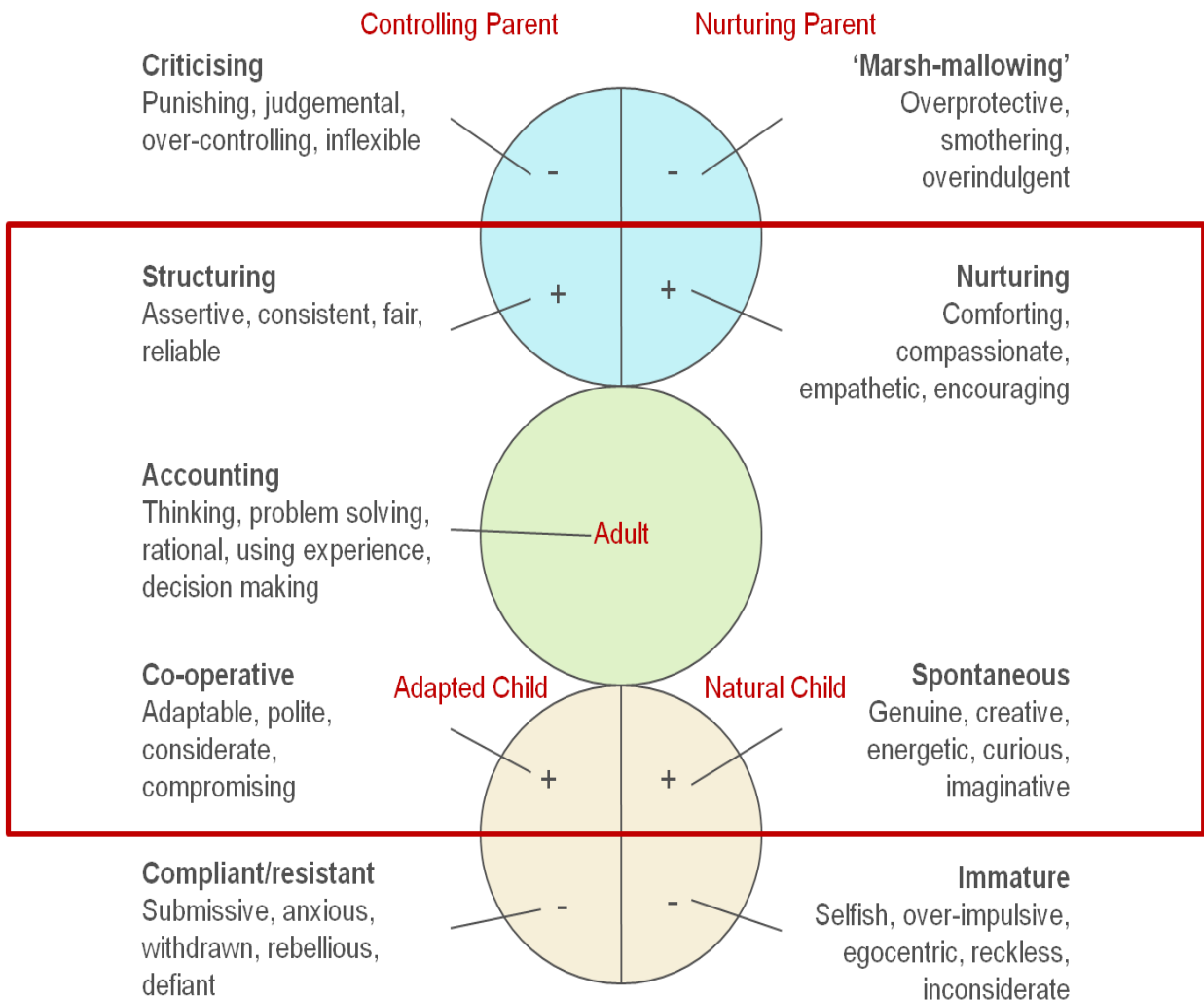
The ego-states describe ways of thinking, feeling and behaving. You can understand more about your behaviour and the behaviour of others by understanding the different ego-states that we all have access to.

The child includes the thoughts, feelings and behaviours we developed as we grew up; The parent includes the behaviours, thoughts and feelings we have copied from significant people in our lives and the adult is the part that is logical and problem-solving, with 'here and now' thoughts, feelings and behaviour.

Our ego-states are unique to each of us – because our past is ours alone – each ego-state can be split and we show each in different ways – positive and negative.

Maximising Ego States

Ego states can show up positively and negatively, as illustrated below. It is possible to access the positive aspects of each of our ego states, as seen in the red box:



Behavioural Clues To Ego-States

By observing people's choice of words, vocal tone, body language and attitude, it is possible to detect which ego state they are currently in. It is then possible to alter our own ego state, which can bring about a change in them.

	Nurturing Parent	Critical Parent	Adult	Adapted Child	Free Child
Words	Good, nice, never mind, I love you	Ought, should, must, always, never, don't, ridiculous, absurd	How? What? Why? When? Expedient, appropriate, probably	I can't, I hope, I wish, please, thank you, may I?	Ouch! Hi! Wow! Want, won't
Voice	Loving, tender, comforting, concerned, affectionate	Critical, preaching, condescending, disgusted	Even, measured	Placating, defiant, whiney	Free, loud, energetic
Gestures & expressions	Open arms, smiling, arms round shoulders, stroking, nodding	Pointing fingers, frowns, clenched fist	Thoughtful, alert, open	Innocent, pointing, aggrieved	Uninhibited, spontaneous, loose, unrestrained
Attitude	Understanding, caring, giving, unselfish	Judgemental, moralistic, authoritarian	Evaluative of facts, objective, dispassionate, controlled	Demanding, complaint, ashamed, procrastinating	Fun-loving, changeable, uncompromising, angry
Positive Aspects	Cares and supports another person in a loving way when needed or wanted	Provides and enforces laws of conduct, manners, traditions and sets limits	Objective, unbiased, calm, rational, consistent	Polite, showing courtesy and respect	Open and direct, has fun and emanates joy and pleasure
Negative Aspects	Over solicitous, "smother mother", "let me do that for you"	Denies self-worth of another person. Inflexible, puts down the happy child	Unfeeling, dull	Self-destructive to get attention, "creep"	Destructive of self and others while having fun. "let's go faster"