

Emotional Drivers

Emotional Drivers are a model for inner patterns that influence our thinking, feeling and behaviour. Many of our inner patterns date back to our infancy; they basically represent the voices of external authorities (primarily those of our parents but also those of teachers, other important persons or society in general). Over time they become an integral part of our very being.

This is because as infants we are totally dependent upon our parents and other important care givers, and develop a finely tuned antenna for which behaviours will reward us with- and which jeopardizes the love and care we crave. Depending upon the environment of our childhood, we are exposed to different demands from which our personal Drivers derive, so to speak. This is a process which takes place without us noticing it at all – and here is the problem: If we aren't aware of our Drivers, we are unable to challenge them.

The American transaction analyst Taibi Kahler extrapolated five Drivers that are considered to be typical:

- The “Be Strong!” Driver
- The “Be Perfect!” Driver
- The “Please Others!” Driver
- The “Hurry up” Driver
- The “Try Hard!” Driver

Although they seem negative, the Drivers have two sides: Obviously, if they are given free rein and allowed to dominate your life unchecked, they can cause you lots of stress and unhappiness. On the other hand, each one of these Drivers also represents an important inner resource that has probably also stood you in good stead, helping you to achieve things in life that otherwise would have been out of your reach. The trick is to be aware of those in play so that you can make a conscious decision about whether or not to listen to them!

BE STRONG			
The Message	Ultimate Belief	Positive Side	Negative Inner voice
Grit your teeth! Don't show any emotions! Maintain your composure!	Security is only found in independence and therefore dependencies and vulnerabilities must be avoided.	Vigorous, resourceful and self-reliant.	I always have to expect and be ready for the worst! I must always be strong and invulnerable! I can trust no one!

BE PERFECT			
The Message	Ultimate Belief	Positive Side	Negative Inner voice
Don't make any mistakes. Mistakes are unacceptable.	Only maximal control over people and things is sure to get you recognition, therefore mistakes are to be avoided.	Sense of perfection. Always striving to improve.	By just being myself, I am of no interest to anyone. I have to show a perfect performance to deserve love and appreciation!

PLEASE OTHERS			
The Message	Ultimate Belief	Positive Side	Negative Inner voice
Always be amiable. Must be liked. Always accommodate.	One only receives affection by pleasing everybody; therefore, never say "no".	Sensitive, co-operative and mindful.	By just being myself, I am of no importance, worthless and have no rights. In order to mean anything, I have to serve the wellbeing of others.

HURRY UP			
The Message	Ultimate Belief	Positive Side	Negative Inner voice
Always look ahead. Don't stop. Stay busy. Keep going!	Hurry up so as not to miss something important.	High activity- and performance disposition.	Since no one is interested in me (only what I DO), I am not allowed to take space nor time for myself. I always miss the important things in life.

TRY HARD			
The Message	Ultimate Belief	Positive Side	Negative Inner voice
Do your utmost! Only the difficult is worth your while.	Only a maximum effort will secure success.	Staying power and perseverance.	I can't do anything truly well or finish anything unless I make the ultimate effort – and even then I can't always make it.