

THE HEROINE'S PROGRESS

1. The Script is established by a part of the Child which I call Spunky (formerly called A-1 or A in C or "little professor.")

2. Spunky contains the "Will to Live". (Bergson's "Elan Vital").

This is expressed by the child's "insatiable curiosity" which is a basic drive. The thrust of Curiosity propels Spunky forward to explore the World and Life. She (Spunky) crawls forward and touches and checks on and on as best she can, driven by this force within her. (Some curiosity exists in other animals, but the maintenance and persistence of Curiosity in the Child is a peculiarly human characteristic to which the human race owes its discoveries and inventions. Curiosity leads to Creativity.)

3. However, to Live (i.e. to express her Curiosity and to become creative) The Spunky Child must Survive. She cannot do it on her own, and rely on instinct, as other animals can do relatively soon after birth. She must depend on parents. Here she is, more endowed than any other animal, yet less capable of self-support in the world. How frustrating! At least she can use her imagination to project herself forward towards the World and the Future. She hears fairy tales and stories of heroes and heroines; she'll be one, too, and move out of this dopey enslaved status.

4. So, between ages 4 and 7 she creates an exciting Script which spells out how she will confront Life and the World. This is the story of THE HEROINE'S PROGRESS, with fascinating scenes and actors, adventures, interesting switches, and triumph. There are also numbers in it (they're new and mysterious, they say "how many times" (three tries?) and they name ages (thirty?). The Script answers "Who am I?" and "Where am I going?" Great!

5. Ah, but not so fast! To live her heroic life she must Survive, remember?

6. What are the conditions for Survival? She's got some nonverbal notions, because she made it thus far to, say, age 5.

7. Well, she made it because there were Giants around, (parents and such) who nurtured her and gave her strokes. Without their strokes that gave her a "Live" message she would have been sucked into marasmic Non-Life, whence her predecessor, "Sleepy" (C-1) came.

8. If she does not have Permission to Live she suspects she can't make it into the future. All right, then, she inquires non-verbally in C-C language; "What are the conditions, parents? What toll do you exact so I can progress on the Life-Voyage that enacts my beautiful Script?"

9. "Aha!" says the Child part of the Giants, in which there secretly resides a witch or troll who also talks secret nonverbal Child language. "Aha! You think you can make it forward and leave us behind? Not on your life! We have here this document that you have signed in blood by being born, and it has all these fine-print conditions that you must fulfill. Without these, you may not live! You may not know it, but, my dear Spunky, you have a supervising partner called Spooky (TA people call her P-1) whom we have been training to accompany you wherever you go. Spooky knows all these conditions, called injunctions, and you may not live out your Script unless you incorporate these. You must work with Spooky because: If you don't then Our Curse Is Upon You and you will revert back to being Sleepy (C-1) and glide back into the non-Life that preceded your birth."

10. "Gosh!" says Spunky, still in special C-C language, "Guess I have no choice." I do know that 'to live, I must survive'. So I will include Spooky's ideas into my Script; I just hope there aren't too many dreadful injunctions and that I can cheat a little on executing them, later on."
11. Now, as she proceeds to develop her Script, Spunky inserts some of Spooky's injunctions, fitting them in at various time-spots on her Script, so there's some leeway in between. She adds anything else she can find that might offset them. Here and there she gets some "Fairy Godmother" or "Kindly Wizard" messages which she quickly inserts. They are not as powerful as the injunctions, because they come from grandparents, or family friends or siblings who are not directly related to Survival, but they might be of help at some possible future switch-points, where she might switch roles and pass on a bad injunction elsewhere.
12. Time elapses, and Sleepy, Spunky and Spooky, now all uneasily united together as the Child, discover that they are part of a larger individual called The Self which has additional new parts. In this Self there is the Parent part (P-2) which stores up good and bad ideas that the parents put in words, and there is also the Adult part which is taking in and checking out all kinds of ideas and experiences from the World. Actually, Spunky has been contributing to filling up the Adult with information, because she has continued to explore and test with her Curiosity as much as she was allowed to by Spooky and by her Parent. (The Parent part tells her that there is Nothing New Under the Sun and she should stop, but she goes on testing anyway because of her Drive).
13. Still, Spunky is a little turned-off by the Adult, who is rather new on the scene, functions like a computer, has no imagination, and gobbles up the information she digs up, plus lots of other stuff she doesn't really like.
14. Around adolescence, when new hormonal juices flow around in her Self, she pulls out her Script-story and compares it with some of the heroic tales she's been reading. She revises it some, updating the names of her characters and scenes, but she is awfully busy dealing with new stuff in her body and all the demands coming in to "make something of herself". One day, in discussing her heroic creation, her Parent announces that the Script sounds childish and foolish, and Spunky, as a part of the Child, feels embarrassed. So the Parent quickly writes a Counter-Script which specifies how to keep busy, and the family nods approval. Peace in our Time!
15. More time elapses. Now our friend is a "Grown-up" and looks like a Giant, but she does not feel like one. She sees a TA therapist. "Hi, therapist," she says. "I'm a 'functioning person' because I follow my Counter-Script and I do lots of things just right. But there is a part of me which you TA people call my Child who is unhappy because she wants me to live out my Script. But my script says 'At 30, marry a Prince and go nuts.'" Now I don't like the idea of going nuts. I did try to pass on the "go nuts" part of my favorite student, as an Episcript. It worked for a while, my student went nuts, and I met a Prince. But this passing on of a "hot potato" doesn't hold me enough, any more than my Counter-Script does, because I have headaches. So please help me get rid of my Script, or of the wish to 'act out' my Script.
16. Now the therapist must not make this contract. She must know that the Script is a juicy story which belongs to the Spunky Child, the most exciting, alive part of the Self. For the Self to feel alive and become fulfilled the Script must be enacted. It's the bad injunctions that cause trouble; they must be identified and extracted from the Script.

17. But Spooky is also a part of the Child, now, she tries to enforce the injunctions. She makes like she has a lot of power. She waves the "Adapted Child" flag, and claims to be the whole Child, just because she talks in a scared child's voice.

18. Nonsense! In reality, Spooky now has no power at all, because her banner only represents the shadow of the Giants who ruled when Spunky and Spooky were young. Spunky and Spooky are interlocked because they both still believe in magic. They both experienced an Arbitrary Force that ruled them when they were under the dominance of the Giants, and they believe these Giants still rule over Life and Death.

19. These fine-print conditions, these injunctions that Spunky promised to obey at the peril of her life, and that Spooky promised to check on, they are life-less addendae that cannot be enforced, since the Giant rulers under whom they were decreed are now no longer ruling the Realm.

20. So if she wanted to, Spunky could simply pluck these silly injunctions right out of her Script. After all, the Script was her own personal creation in the first place, and she owns it to modify it as she wants. She could use her Adult to check out her new, present Reality, and make an alliance with her Adult in spite of Spooky who makes noise and says: "No, no, no, don't you dare throw out the injunctions, the Giants are still here, yah, yah, yah, here they ah!"

21. Unfortunately, because Spooky is also in the Child, along with Spunky, her noise sometimes interferes with Spunky's access to her Adult, and the Magic Rule of Injunctions continues. The Child is in an impasse: Spunky and Spooky are both battling within her.

22. Now the therapist must exercise Spooky's "magic" by sounding even more scary than Spooky. She puts on her magician's cap (her Merlin) and roars: "Permission to not go nuts even if you marry!" Wham! Wham! "I am bigger and stronger than any Giant you ever knew! And here is Protection! Now meet your Adult, and proceed!"

23. Spooky cowers. Spunky has a new look at her Script. Yep. it looks exciting, she wants to go ahead, she's even got some scraps from her Counter-Script that might fit in nicely and enlarge it; (like a college degree). She hears her Adult saying: "with just a few changes, our Script is great!"

24. Then Spooky pulls out her final trump-card. "Your Adult has no magic! Your Adult doesn't even believe in Magic! If you have no magic, you're not ok!"

25. Ouch! That was a low blow! It hits Spunky's Position, which steers her How to Feel along the way.

26. You see, there was a time, way back, when Spunky felt OK; the Giants were loving, and gave strokes; they seemed OK and gave a message that Spunky was OK. Then there was also a time when they allowed her to feel helplessly hungry and cold and she didn't feel OK, and the Giants sure weren't OK for allowing this. But Spunky decided that she, too, probably had omnipotent magic powers like the Giants, because there were times when she could simply wish for the Giants to feed or stroke her, and they would comply. This is how she got out of her "You're not OK I'm not OK" position to a more comfortable one, and that's how she was able to make up a Script. Now this clumsy therapist has cancelled out her belief in Magic, without it she feels "Not OK" and the therapist surely isn't "OK" for rubbing her nose in all this boring Adult Stuff. "You're just giving me words! I need a gut-feeling!" she cries. "To Hell with the Script! There's just a vacuum here!"

27. This is now the most important, and the most dangerous point of treatment. It is here that the therapist's potency counts. The patient is in the throes of despair, doesn't trust herself and doesn't trust the therapist. The therapist no longer seems magical, and sounds boring.
28. Now the therapist must remain powerfully ok and, with dignity and compassion, accept the full thrust of the patient's existential rage. Spooky, from a cobwebby corner, powerless but still trying, mutters: "I told you so, I told you so, see, see, the Curse is taking effect, you're nothing, you've got nothing" while Spunky rages: "Is that all? Is that all? You're lying, you're no good, I hate you!"
29. At this point the therapist must also watch Reality. An Adult Contract must be made to Live a while, in spite of Despair. This can be done even though Spunky mistrusts the therapist, because by now some contact has been established on a new basis between Spunky and her own Adult, however much the patient dislikes admitting this.
30. Thereby, the patient gets a renewed sense of the realistic power of her own Adult. Renewed examination of the Script is possible. Destructive injunctions can be nullified and there can be some additions or new ways of implementing old wishes that the patient hadn't even thought about before because she was not using all the available data.
31. So, the patient considers, maybe she can feel OK after all. Maybe the therapist is OK, though she might have been smarter or more sensitive. The patient has now reached what I call the "Sober I'm OK you're OK" position with which she can forgive the therapist (and her parents) for being human. She says: "What next?"
32. Well, at the end of the road there will be Death anyway. That's guaranteed.
33. "What do I do meanwhile?" says Spunky. "Oh, here's my Script! It's a little less dramatic than I thought. But it's still mine and nobody else's. I guess I'll have a go at it!" With that, she invites her Adult to pick it up and they walk out of the therapist's office, dumping the shreds of negative injunctions into her waste basket.
34. As she throws a parting glance over her shoulder at the therapist she notes that the therapist is no Merlin; funny that she ever thought differently; but so what? She's got an exciting Script to develop on her continuing Voyage in Life.
35. Like the Ulysses story, which is a proto-typical one, her Script will lead her to perils and dangers. They come with adventure. But her new OK position can guide her ultimately to safe shores, the way Hermes guided Ulysses. She does not have to remain stuck-in the Counterscript, which Penelope exemplifies in the same story.
36. If she ever becomes a therapist herself, she remembers the following principles for treatment:
  - a) Transactionally, in every-day life, difficulties between people are usually Parent-Child problems of communication, and they can be identified and diagramed easily.

36. Continued

- b) However, when there are destructive script injunctions within a particular patient, a Structural problem operates in addition within her. The script injunctions are internalized in Spunky, and the basic Script is in Spunky and both are a part of the Child of the grown-up person.
- c) This means that the therapist must intervene and take sides in an internal Child-Child battle to liberate the "natural Child" (to wit, Spunky,) and her creation, the Script, from Spooky's anachronistic adaptation.
- d) Of course the clue to "Spooky" injunctions lies in "gallows-transaction" laughter by the patient, i.e. inappropriate self-mocking laughter when mentioning a frightening, sad, or dreaded possibility.
- e) The therapist can either attack the bad injunctions from Spooky without bothering too much about the Script, or she can tease out some script material from Spunky for a better alliance. This depends on the particular rapport between patient and therapist.
- f) Either way the patient's Parent is likely to interfere, usually in defense of the Counter-Script, rather than the Script, but this is a minor difficulty, easily circumvented if the therapist is knowledgeable and recognizes what goes on.
- g) Also the therapist must not be fooled here if rebelliousness to her or Parent-figures appears; it does not signify progress; it's simply a diversionary tactic by Spooky and can be ignored.
- h) A more important source of difficulty in treatment is that if and when it is necessary to work structurally between Spunky and Spooky this has the effect of challenging the Existential position of the patient. The patient must arrive at the new "sober OK position" solidly in order for the Script to be reinstated, minus injunctions.
- i) In addition, the patient's Adult must be brought in. A solid cure can be maintained only if the patient understands what were the issues. This does mean verbal interpretation, in spite of the current "anti-words" vogue.. It reduces the glamor, slightly, but offers the patient a frame or binding for her script which permits her to keep adjusting it to reality while also allowing it to blossom and develop. Even if she meets rough times, the person can now maintain her position in balance and sustain genuine inner power in herself.