

## TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS AND SCRIPT ANALYSIS TODAY

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"So, David has just been fired and he can't marry me," sighed Stella, as the Transactional Analysis Group Treatment session began. "I had such high hopes, but--there's the story of my life again!--I got stuck with a bum!" She pushed back her long blonde hair, a wry smile on her lips.

"That's too bad about David's job," said Bill. "But, surely . . . I mean you said you were crazy about David after your disappointment with John . . ."

"Don't remind me about that rat," said Stella, bitterly, "I was so happy with him after Victor left for Europe! Maybe I shouldn't, but I've got to give up on men. I think I'll become a Lesbian." She looked around expectantly.

"Hey, look," Bill retorted, "there are some good guys around, you know, like . . ."

"Not really," said Stella, turning away and crying.

"There you go again on your cry-baby racket!" said George, with irritation. "Okay, we're all very sorry for you, Stella. Are you satisfied?"

"Sure it's easy for you to attack me, George," said Stella with sudden angry dignity, drying her tears, "but we all know you're not so hot when you have to deal with your boss!"

"You're really being unfair to Stella, George," said Gina, a motherly looking woman who had recently joined the group. "The least we can do in here is be kind to one another!"

"Thank you, Gina," said Stella tearfully. "At least you understand I'm unhappy . . ."

As Gina turned to Stella with a sympathetic nod, the four other members of the eight patient group leaned forward about to take a stand, except that the group process was interrupted by the therapist, who began to draw circles and lines on a large pad of paper she was holding on her lap.

A Group Therapist who interrupts group process???

Yes. Transactional Analysts actively do so to enter into the transactions that go on among group members or to underline them.

Without recognizing it, Stella had just demonstrated, in the here-and-now, how she was implementing a tragic "script" whereby she was dooming herself to breaking away from any man she cared about and to end up lonely and bitter.

To understand even this small sample of a "TA" group treatment session and the manner in which its seemingly insignificant transactions represent each person's life, past, present and future--we must look at the theory of Ego-States, Transactions, and Scripts--as well as the Rackets and Games that implement them. We will be using the cast of characters we have just introduced for examples.

Eric Berne, the originator of Transactional Analysis, defined an Ego-State as a coherent system of feelings and thoughts manifested in the here-and-now. There are three Ego-States, colloquially called Parent, Adult and Child--names that Berne adopted from a patient's nomenclature when he decided that TA would use simple vocabulary

and become as intelligible to patients as to therapists. His original names for Ego-States were, respectively:

(P): The Extero-psyche:--an assimilation system.

(A): The Neo-psyche:--a data processing system.

(C): The Archaeo-psyche:--a regressive system.

These earlier names for Ego-States have developmental connotations--for each one of us starts out with the Child, who introjects messages from the environment and accommodates them into his genetic background by means of his own special system of thought and feeling.

We then develop the Parent, which assimilates parental instructions and examples operative as the person grows, and, lastly, we develop the Adult. The Adult is a "new" part of the psyche for, until the age of twelve, people are incapable of logical thought and, anyway, the Adult has not acquired sufficient data to process.

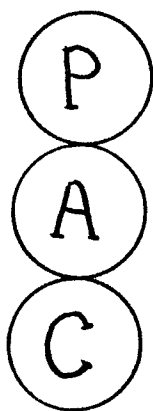
The Adult Ego-State operates like a computer which processes reality and has no feelings in itself, although it might be activated by feelings in the Child or Parent and can report on feelings, or consider them. The Adult Ego-State is available to the individual for decision making and for negotiation with others in regard to action or work. By the time a person is grown, all three systems operate interchangeably and can be switched from minute to minute as a result of internal dialogues, transactions with others, and changes in the immediate external situation. People choose to operate out of one Ego-State or another. The choice is often made because of past conditioning--it might be made outside their immediate awareness--but the choice is not necessarily "unconscious". Autonomy lies in the freedom and ability to make one's own choice about the appropriate Ego-State to operate in at each given minute in time without being stifled or driven by anachronistic needs and conditioning. Thereby a person can open new avenues for himself--for

creativity and for intimacy.

Ego-States can be identified in the here-and-now by tone of voice, gestures, facial expression, body posture, and syntax, rather than by content, which is why TA therapists use tape-recorders for instant replay of voice tones when they want to draw attention to the Ego-State of a particular patient.

Transactional analysts also diagram Ego-States to illustrate switches in one person or transactions between the respective Ego-States of two persons.

Ego-States are diagrammed thus:

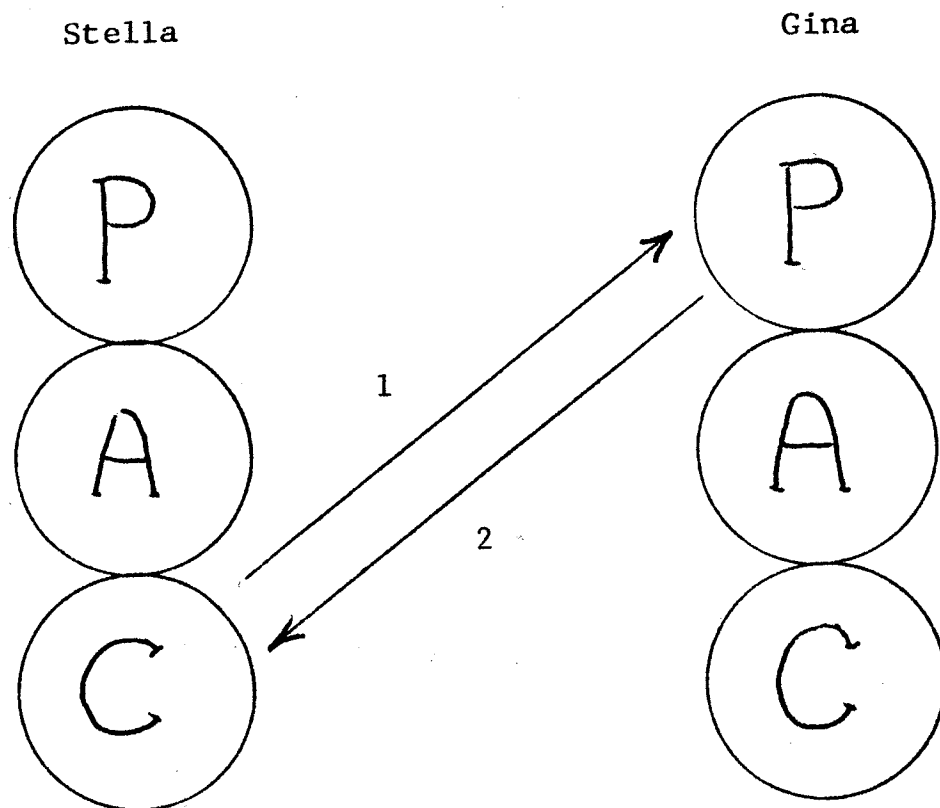


This represents the basic model for the "Structure of Personality"--although both the Parent and Child Ego-States contain subdivisions and broad ranges of manifestations.

Transactions are illustrated by drawing lines (vectors) between an Ego-State in one person

and an Ego-State in another.

In the segment of a TA session which we presented, Stella came on with a Child Ego-State, seeking a "nurturing" Parent with whom she could have a "complementary" transaction (of a Child-Parent and Parent-Child kind). Gina came on with a "critical" Parent towards George, and she remained in a Parent Ego-State--albeit the other aspect of the Parent, the nurturing one--in order to transact with Stella. When the therapist interrupted they were about to continue in a transaction that can be illustrated thus:



Stella: (1) "I'm so unhappy."

Gina: (2) "You poor dear."

Diagram II

The parallel vectors of complementary transactions signify that the two people can go on transacting indefinitely if each remains in the originally selected Ego-State. Sometimes this is very gratifying for both parties, but sometimes it simply signifies an ongoing "Racket"--wherein one or both parties is rather artificially reproducing a childhood pattern for transacting because she fears awareness of other feelings or thoughts. This was the case with Stella, as we shall see later

in discussing her script. For reasons buried in her very early childhood, she did not want to recognize that her "tough luck" with boyfriends was really more than just that. In the "now," with Bill and George, she was replaying some of her rejecting behavior with men, but she was about to avoid awareness of this, too, by heading toward a predictable, primitively "safe," repetitive transaction with Gina.

After Stella made her opening statements, Bill came on seemingly with his Adult. Actually, his Child was initiating an "ulterior" transaction, but he did not receive the hoped-for response. An ulterior transaction operates on two levels--overt and covert ("secret"). The intended message is transmitted non-verbally under cover of what is made to sound like an Adult, objective statement.

The transaction went as follows:

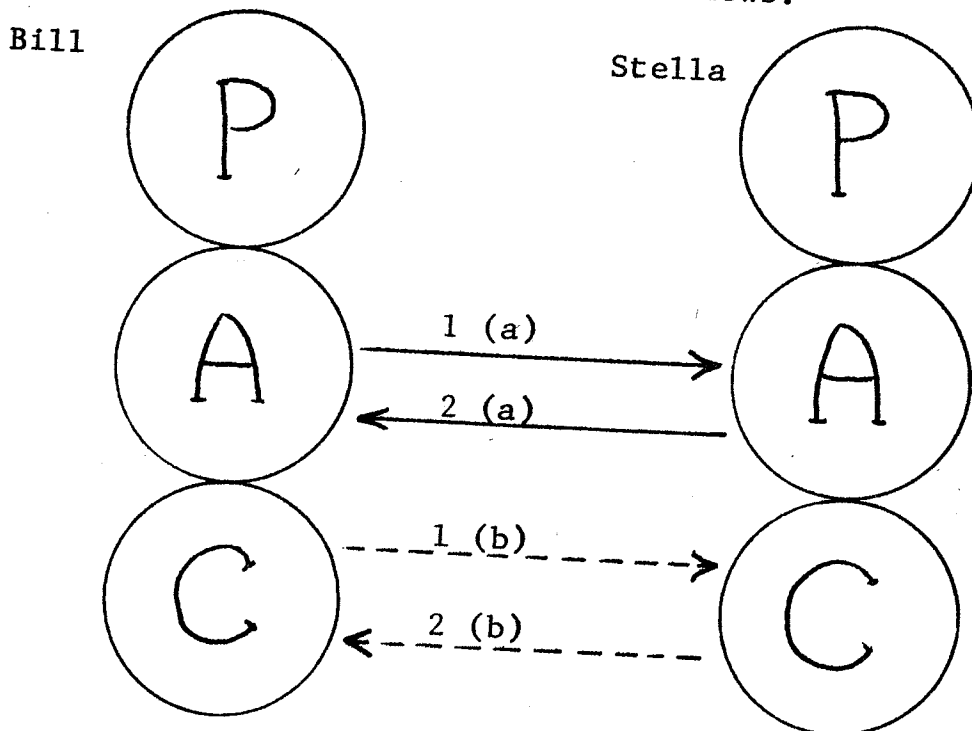


Diagram III

Bill: 1(a) (ostensibly Adult): "There are some good guys around . . ."

Secretly, Child underneath: "Like me!" 1(b)

Stella: 2(a) (ostensibly Adult): "Not really . . ."

Secret, non-verbal: "I don't like you!" 2(b)

When Stella rejected him, Bill probably felt frustrated. He had a choice of Ego-States, and his subsequent behavior depended on this choice. He chose his Adult, and reminded himself that there were plenty of people who liked him, and that it was not essential for everybody to do so in order for him to feel "OK." Without discomfort, he decided not to pursue his attempt with Stella right now, and, what was more important, not to use the episode in order to hold on to angry or hurt feelings that would "justify" his sulking and removing himself from what was going on around him. The sulking and hoarding of such justification is called "collecting brown stamps."

Bill was close to terminating treatment. In the past, Bill would have used the transaction with Stella in order to confirm an old belief lodged in his Parent Ego-State and based on what his mother used to say: "They'll never appreciate you no matter what you do!" This would then justify his sulking or behaving with assertive arrogance or hostility towards the very people with whom he most wanted to be friendly. This time he used his Adult to handle the disappointment rather than his hurt Child or righteous Parent and, a few minutes later, he was free to deal openly with other issues affecting him.

Had Stella been willing to relate positively to Bill there would, of course, have been a different "ulterior" (2b) response from her, such as "I might like you!" and, eventually, Bill might have hoped, there could be some above-board "straight" Child-Child transactions leading to intimacy.

Such a transaction might be:

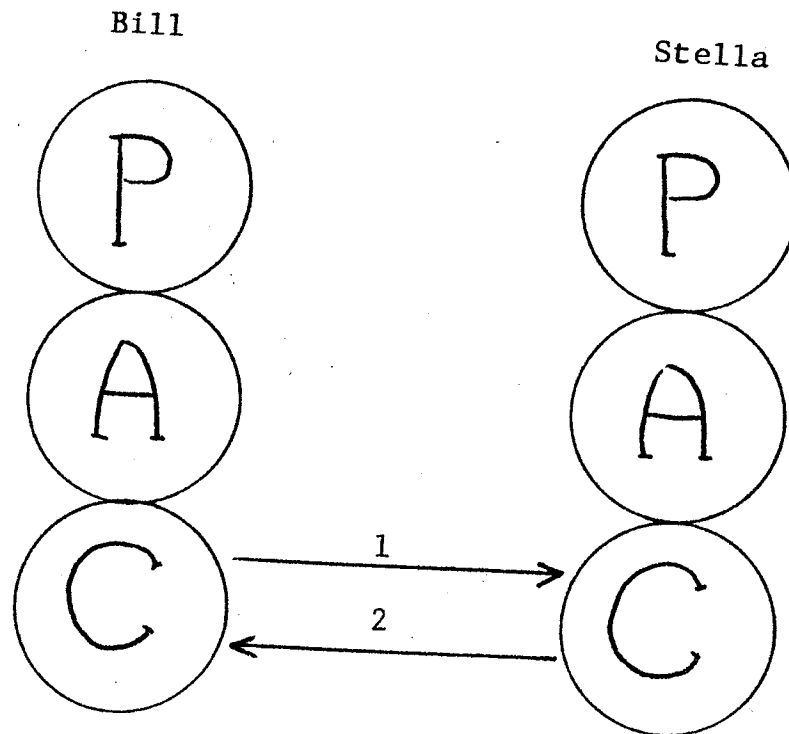


Diagram IV

Bill: (1) "Let's have fun together!"

Stella: (2) "Great! How?"

To implement their Child-Child transactions people also need to have some Adult-Adult transactions involving reality, but communication can be maintained if they remain in step and harmoniously shift their respective Ego-States as they continue transacting.

In contrast, there are "crossed" transactions, which interrupt the exchange. That's when a message directed to one Ego-State is responded to by a different Ego-State than the one intended, so the transactional vectors



"cross." By drawing this, we can show how and where this occurs.

For instance, George's critical Parent addressed Stella's Child, expecting perhaps to enter a complementary transaction with a penitent, "adapted" Child. But Stella "crossed" the transaction instead, by going for a "Game" payoff, which involved a switch in Ego-States. (This offers temporary relief to the person who switches because it reproduces a slightly later stage of the individual's past than the more primitive Racket.) The diagram below illustrates the moves leading to the "Game Payoff," in this instance the Game of "Blemish" or NIGYSOB ("Now I've Got You, You Son of a Bitch"). Stella pulled a switch to Parent, leaving out her Adult, and came on with her critical Parent to George's Child.

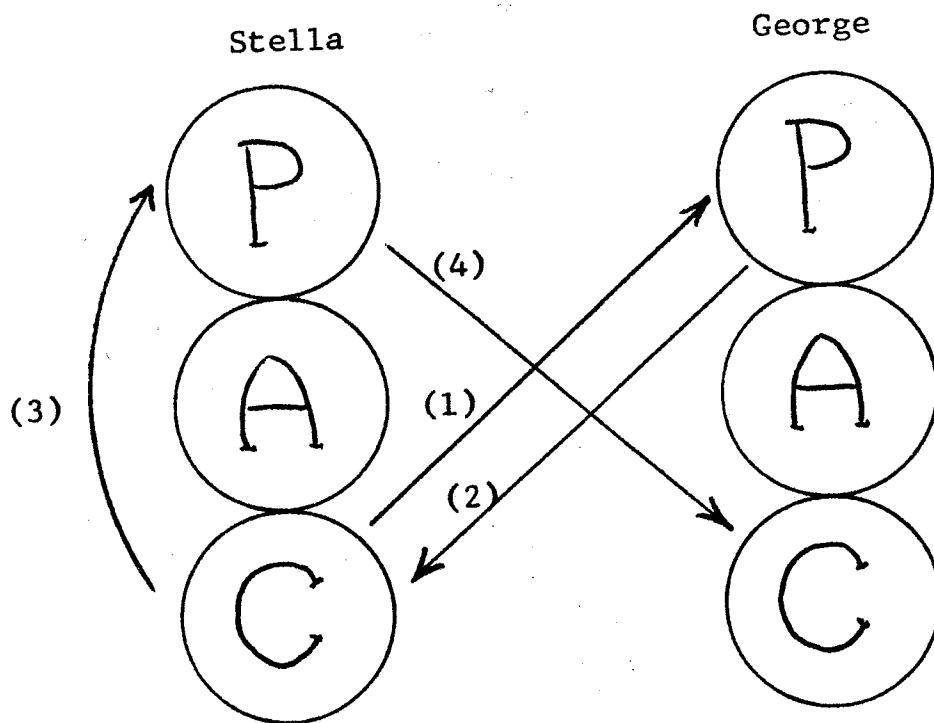


Diagram V

- Stella: (1) (Child seeking nurturing Parent) "I'm unhappy!"
- George: (2) (Critical Parent instead) "You're in a Racket!"
- Stella: (3) (Internally, switching to Parent Ego-State)  
"Help, mother, take over!"
- Stella: (4) (Critical Parent to George's Child) "You're  
no good either!"

Why do people transact with each other? To exchange "strokes," said Berne. The word "stroke" is used to signify a unit of recognition and as a reminder of the fact that the primary vital recognition for the infant comes through physical handling and stroking. Non-verbally, the message is "Live!"\*

Past infancy we symbolize. We register strokes from signals such as smiles, frowns, voice sounds and then words; eventually, we can register strokes even outside another human being's presence--by reading a letter, for instance, or by remembering or imagining somebody's reaction. That's because we can also "store" strokes to draw on. But, as with hunger for food, there is a recurrent hunger for live strokes that can be met only by actually transacting with others.

People exchange "positive," "negative" or "crooked" strokes. A positive stroke is, of course, a physical caress; beyond early infancy it's also a smile or word of acceptance. A negative stroke can be given by rough handling, a slap, a frown or call of disapproval, or verbal criticism. All of the above are "straight" strokes;

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\*Rene Spitz and others have demonstrated conclusively that the actual survival of infants depends on the stroking they get in addition to food, clothing and shelter. Otherwise, they die of "marasmus."

the feeling and intent of the sender are conveyed unambiguously.

Not so with crooked strokes, which are phony and confusing. They convey two contradictory messages; one from the Parent Ego-State of the sender and an opposite one from his Child Ego-State. For instance, a suffocating hug to a baby, or overly tight holding, might be intended to signify "love" but the translated covert Child message that goes with it is: "Lose your breath! (I wish you'd die!) or "Don't be!" Ditto with such verbal expressions as "You're so cute, I could eat you up!" or "I love you to death!" (Meaning: "I'll never let you grow.") A father might be chuckling with what he thinks is "manly support" when his youngster gets hurt in a fight, but with his Child Ego-State he is saying: "Ha, ha, funny!" (Suffer, I like it!) or "Get beaten! Fail! Don't outdo me!"

Young children need a large quantity of strokes for sheer survival. That's their lifeline. Because of their helplessness, children have no way of selecting what strokes they receive. They lap up whatever kinds they get from the family--positive, negative or crooked, even if poison comes with the nourishment. For the child who doesn't die outright, whatever strokes he gets represent the "home-cooked soup" he survives on, and he becomes conditioned to it.

A young child is particularly attuned to the Child Ego-States of his chronological parents. Therefore, any covert Child messages that come with strokes make greater impact than the overt ones. If such covert messages keep coming along with the strokes, and of course they do, because they represent strong feelings in the mother or father's Child, they are experienced as "conditions for survival"; they are non-verbal "injunctions" from all-powerful, arbitrary Rulers; Giants; Gods on Olympus with power over life and death. Translated from the non-verbal, such "conditions" can cover the gamut from "suffer and scream," "be helplessly

confused," "be lifeless" (passive) to, actually: "die!" In the case of a "die" injunction, some children do, indeed, oblige by dying in infancy; others who develop colic, asthma, or what-have-you thereby obtain some extra strokes from a Nurturing Parent, so they discover that they can avoid the full impact of impossible conditions, but for a price. They survive and grow physically, but they develop an artificial "substitute system" for acquiring strokes which will lead to emotional "Rackets," and they introject the injunctions as determinants for future feelings and behavior.\*

The introjected injunctions remain imbedded in the Child Ego-State of a grown person and continue to determine his feelings and behavior throughout his life, unless they are brought to light and cancelled by Adult "re-decision." Tragic cases demonstrate that it is possible for a grown person's 'Child to maintain in juxtaposition mutually exclusive beliefs that can lead all the way to as illogical a proposition as: to be recognized (stroked), I must . . . kill myself, be killed, kill someone, etc.

In addition, the Child Ego-State of a grown person

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\*Footnote: It may seem unbelievable to the reader that, even under duress, the child would be capable of making "get now, pay later" deals that mortgage his future. However, fairy tales are replete with this principle and children have no difficulty understanding it, because it's so close to their own inner experience. For instance, Rumpelstiltskin weaves gold for the heroine on condition that she promise him her baby in the future; the frog retrieves the princess's golden ball on condition that she'll take him into her bed later, and so on. Of course, fairy tales also illustrate attempts--successful and unsuccessful--to avoid fulfilling such promises made under pressure; that's a separate issue. The point here is that young children know what it's like to be forced into committing themselves to fulfill harsh conditions in the future.

maintains the conviction that the particular diet of strokes he was raised on is the only kind that is worth getting. That's fine for someone raised with a high proportion of positive strokes, because he continues to acknowledge and exchange these whenever there are opportunities. Thereby, even without seeking them, he will continue to receive plenty of positive strokes when he transacts with others, and he will feel "OK."("To those that have, shall be given . . .")

But the sad fact about human nature is that the need to reproduce the old diet also applies to people raised with a high proportion of negative strokes. Such people often crave continued punishment; for instance, by becoming delinquent or addicted, and getting caught.

Similarly, people raised with a high proportion of "crooked" strokes continue to seek these. The crooked stroke formula is, of course, complex, because it includes both an overt (Parent) message and a covert (Child) message. So, to reproduce this diet, people raised on it initiate "Rackets" and "Games" whereby they try to "hook" the people in their present lives into transacting with them along the old stroke patterns of their childhood.

A Racket manifests itself as a persistent attempt to maintain artificially a series of ongoing complementary transactions of a particular kind. These transactions represent a replay of the very early habitual stroke experience in a person's childhood, including the artificial "substitute" system. A Game is also a replay of the childhood scene, but it is related to a slightly later period in the player's childhood, when he has already integrated a cohesive Parent Ego-State, with which he momentarily identifies. For, in contrast to a Racket, by definition a Game always involves a switch in the Ego-State of the "player." (See Diagram V)

Let's take Stella to illustrate how she was

currently--at age 27--investing herself chronically in playing a Racket in order to keep receiving the archaic "crooked strokes" she was raised on, and how, failing these, she switched to a Game.

Most of her communications came across in the form of a repetitive, whining, "unhappiness Racket" (preferably with women) whereby she obtained sympathy strokes from a volunteer Nurturing Parent (like Gina). She would persist in this, if allowed (we had experienced this in previous sessions), until the "hooked" partner's Child was secretly exasperated, whereupon she would flood that person with even more tears, making it difficult for the person to pull away.

From this we could deduce that Stella's very early stroke diet came from a guilt-ridden, Nurturing (female) Parent, whose Child was exasperated at having to care for her. Obviously, she had been raised on crooked strokes from her mother; (overtly positive, covertly negative). Additionally, since "unhappiness about men" was Stella's main offering in requesting strokes, we can assume that as Stella grew up she felt that unhappiness in relation to her father improved her chances for strokes from her mother--in other words, that the mother's Child liked it when Stella was unhappy about her father.

Stella's face would show a half-smile whenever she described some horrendous piece of behavior from a boyfriend, and this confirmed the hypothesis that, facially, the mother's Child had shown some glee whenever Stella rejected--or was rejected--by her father, and that she resented it if Stella showed positive feelings for him. This latter conclusion corresponds to the fact that an additional function of a Racket is to provide compensatory strokes for artificially maintained "Racket" feelings that cover up other, here-and-now genuine feelings of a kind that were prohibited in childhood. We could surmise that the mother's Child had subtly prohibited Stella from expressing positive feelings for her father--for, in the group, although Stella was attracted to

Bill, she had pulled away from transacting with him in favor of "hooking" Gina.

Whenever she failed to "hook" a partner for a Racket (and, as you may have noticed in the opening dialogue, Gina had not gotten "hooked" immediately when Stella expressed her unhappiness), then Stella would switch into her Parent Ego-State (reproducing her mother's Parent as she had integrated it by means of identification).

Her Games were NIGYSOB or "Blemish"--involving the transactions illustrated in Diagram V.

From the type of Game ending ("Payoff") Stella sought when she was in a Parent Ego-State, we could see, in the here-and-now, what must have been a typical "crossed" transaction between Stella's mother and father: the Game itself often represents a microcosmic replay of a typical three-cornered childhood scene--so it was clear that when Stella was young she learned to call on her mother to attack her father whenever he failed to respond as a Nurturing Parent.

In the treatment group, Stella had been increasingly going for NIGYSOB payoffs with the men. Acceleration and intensification of Games is a warning that a person may be heading towards a harmful, or even tragic, outcome for his life.

Flashbacks to Stella's early childhood validated some of what we saw. Stella told us that her mother, now a successful novelist, had been a struggling writer when Stella was born. She was trapped into domesticity with a husband who was, Stella said, quoting her mother, "Irresponsible, unemployed and a drunk to boot." The mother had finally "thrown him out" when Stella was of school age and when she "no longer needed him for a babysitter."

One can assume from this that the mother's Child was furious at the father and conflicted about Stella's

existence, which maintained her in the marriage, and perhaps Stella picked this up in the stroking. Of course, Stella could not have told us that in so many words, because overtly the mother's Parent had cared for her, especially when she cried. In fact, in her present relationship with Stella, the mother was writing her long, solicitous letters, deploring that she was having so much trouble with boyfriends.

Stella had only hazy memories about her father, but she treasured snapshots showing him gaily swinging her in the playground. Other feelings were ambiguous; she remembered laughing with him, while mother was locked away in her study. Sometimes he was erratic when playing with her. At those times, she would call out "Daddy drunk," and: "Go away, Daddy," and then her mother would come and pull him away. She also remembered that, after he was finally evicted by her mother, she missed him dreadfully and wept a lot about that. She never saw him again.

We can see how Stella's combined Rackets and Games gave us, not only a view to her very early past, but also hinted at a distressing future, which we shall discuss later when we consider scripts.

It is by describing transactional Games with colloquial vocabulary in his best-selling book, Games People Play, that Eric Berne rose to popular--and controversial--fame in 1964. Because the vocabulary was "jazzy," many professionals failed to recognize Berne's underlying genius, and his determined investment in effective treatment, which led him to relinquish his protected practice as an individual psychoanalyst in favor of the highly exposed practice of transactional analysis, which operates in a group where patients learn to use the same tools as the therapist.

Berne's insights came from clinical practice, and from his experience as an Army psychiatrist in World War II. There, under the pressure of having to quickly



diagnose unknown soldiers, he recognized how his intuitive "hunches" often turned out to have been more accurate than conclusions arrived at by a more ponderous process. In other words, Berne became interested in the various aspects of what he later called the Child Ego-State--his own, and that of his patients, along with the way in which the Child Ego-States of two people communicate with each other non-verbally.

He decided to make this phenomenon more explicable and also to find a means whereby each patient--not only the therapist--could translate intuitive awareness into understanding precisely the manner in which early influences were determining his life now, even though he no longer needed to be ruled by them.

The question then posed itself: "What are the essential determinants in communication and therapeutic intervention at each point in time?" Berne developed Transactional Analysis as a method for dealing with this question. The use of TA then facilitates script analysis whereby, as we shall note later, a person can identify--and change, if he wants to--decisions he made in childhood that affect the rest of his life.

With colleagues, including the late Dr. David Kupfer, Berne founded the "International Transactional Analysis Association" in 1958, as well as the TA Bulletin (now the TA Journal). Eric Berne died in 1970 of a congenital heart attack, shortly after finishing his last manuscript\*--and only a few years after he was finally acknowledged as an innovator whose simple--but not simplistic--methods of diagnosis and treatment offered a way for fast yet effective and safe resolution of crippling conflicts and life crises in patients of all psychological categories--from the garden variety neurotic to the psychotic, suicidal, or severely addicted.

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\*What Do You Say After You Say Hello?

A researcher checking out the tenets of TA will find them related to all of dynamic psychology: to Freud, of course, also to Sullivan, Erikson, Federn, Melanie Klein, and Adler. And Jean Piaget's work on systems of thought is indispensable.\*

Still, the particular combination of theory and

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\*Footnote: Psychoanalysts, particularly Erikson, have spelled out stages of emotional development. Piaget has spelled out stages of intellectual development. Not enough research has been done to correlate these two aspects of childhood development, yet they dovetail beautifully in practice. Both schools of thought have spelled out developmental stages in childhood with the implication that a mature person "outgrows" these stages unless he is retarded, "fixated," or psychotic. But for TA therapists capable of identifying the Child and Parent Ego-States as they operate on and off in the Now, it becomes clear that archaic, or, at best, outdated, methods of feeling and thinking can be operating at any moment in a given person, regardless of his emotional or intellectual maturity. Creative intuition and "hunches" represent thought in a Child Ego-State--however, so does erratic magical thinking--and so do certain panics. Similarly, value judgments, both sound ones and prejudiced ones, represent thought in a Parent Ego-State. Behavior is determined not only by feelings but also by mental conclusions. Conclusions arrived at in a Child Ego-State are vastly different from conclusions arrived at by the same person, a few minutes before or after, in a Parent Ego-State, and different again from possible conclusions in an Adult Ego-State.

A TA therapist conversant with Piaget's stages of thought can better identify how the patient is thinking when he is anxious or in a panic and she can select the most suitable handle for intervention at each point in time.

practice, the organizing of the complicated theories of a multiplicity of authors into a method that makes each patient's case clearly explicable to him so he can be a knowledgeable, active implementor of his own treatment--that was uniquely Berne's.

Practice in accurately differentiating between Ego-States in the here-and-now becomes a first tool. In contrast to Id, Ego, Super-Ego, Ego-Ideal, which are abstract personality concepts, Ego-States are observable, phenomenological realities that operate in the present. In addition, like so many reverse periscopes equipped with laser beams, they offer a direct, immediate, deep-down view of feelings and decisions that the patient does not remember because they occurred before he was six years old. Yet, it's the "old, old feelings" that are the ones that generate present-day incapacitating or destructive patterns of behavior, such as Stella's Racket and Games.

TA is contractual. However "sick" the patient, it is always possible to make a treatment contract with his Adult (but, beware, never make it with his Parent!). The therapist and patient agree in advance about a realistic treatment goal. In many cases, the contract negotiation itself becomes the crucial first step in confronting unrealistic "Santa Claus" fantasies.

To implement most contracts, the patient might need to free his "natural" ("Spunky") Child. The treatment group setting offers the opportunity to do that along with practice in recognizing how he can use his Adult to deal with crisis or reality, rather than his out-dated inner Parent, as people tend to do because of childhood habit. The therapist transacts actively with each patient in the group, openly revealing what she sees and thinks. She identifies the types of strokes people seek and expresses intuitive guesses about the feelings and behaviors that may have been operating during a patient's early childhood. Intuitive guesses from the therapist are not "suggestive." They accelerate

treatment even when a hunch is not accurate because the patient's Adult is invited to check it out. (If he habitually agrees uncritically with his "adapted" Child, then that becomes an additional treatment focus.) The therapist's freedom in expressing her own intuitions, even when she's not sure, helps free the patient's own Spunky Child to express his intuitions about himself and others. These are often illuminating insights and contributions, so treatment sessions are lively.

However, the therapist's Adult maintains treatment responsibility, by virtue of the contract she has with each patient; she does not delegate this to the group as a whole and there is no scapegoating. When she "crosses" a patient's Child-Parent transaction with her Adult (which is often done as a "therapeutic cross" to confront unrealistic assumptions in the patient), she knows this causes frustration or anger and is ready to work with these feelings immediately to prevent the hoarding of "brown stamps" by the patient.

With many patients like Bill, persistent Adult confrontation when they transact in anachronistic ways serves to "decontaminate" their Adult Ego-State sufficiently so they become expert at identifying for themselves--and offsetting--the ways in which they were generating their own problems. Having fulfilled their treatment contract, they can go on their way, able to use their own Adult for a therapist.

With other patients such as Stella, this approach is insufficient. In matters of human relationships, they dare not use their Adult for dear life. They communicate in every way that they have a "fate" or "destiny" and that they "can't help" operating the way they do; they desperately hold on to their Rackets and Games. It becomes necessary to examine--and offset--those aspects of their "life script" that are disastrously affecting their current behavior and pre-determining their lives.

Thanks to the techniques of transactional analysis

(such as the previously described manner of obtaining flashback views into a patient's early childhood scene) evidence has accumulated to show that, between the ages of three and six a child makes up a "script" (like a movie script) with which he structures and determines the course of his future life, including the kinds of human relationships he will have, his goals, the quality of his achievements--or failures--and, last not least, how he will feel about them.

To understand script formation we must digress to "Second order structural analysis," i.e., the structural formation of the child under six who forms the script and who, later, manifests himself as the Child Ego-State of the grown person.

Briefly, it is useful to make a schematic distinction between three separate aspects of the child which develop both sequentially and interactively. For ease of representation, we have personified them and named them Sleepy, Spunky and Spooky.

Sleepy represents the most primitive, regressive part of the child, utterly dependent on strokes for survival. He has introjected the "conditions" that came with strokes; also, he represents a pull to inertia.

Spunky is the important nuclear aspect of the "natural" child. He is endowed with an eager zest for life, and is filled with insatiable curiosity. Witness a toddler, crawling forth, unafraid, actively exploring his surroundings. He's the precursor of Columbus and of Einstein, but also of Amelia Earhart who, in her zest, crashed with her plane. Curiosity and risk-taking are the prerequisites for creativity and achievement, but they are dangerous! Spunky is committed to expansive Life, Now, this second, rather than to survival. Therefore, as a toddler, he might crawl happily into the ocean breakers and drown there if not stopped, for he does not have a reliable biological

instinct for self-preservation like other animals. He must be restrained physically; eventually he shows the capacity for responding to the voice tones, facial expressions, gestures and, finally, the words of his caretakers. Mother calls out: "Don't! Stop!" and there's a chance the one-year-old stops short of putting his finger in the rotating electric fan even before she grabs him. After a sufficient number of such episodes, he ruefully points a finger at the shiny fan and mutters "Non't . . . tttop!" He has now integrated mother's message, not because he understood the danger, but because he registered mother's emotion. He does not have permission to touch the fan. Other times, she smiles and nods and does give permission to . . . (squeeze the clay, climb the stairs, etc.).

This illustrates that even though Spunky's adventure-some curiosity is at the root of human creativity, there is a need for the total child to be protected by means of external, and, then, internal controls, lest he destroy himself through sheer joyful expansiveness.

Spooky is the part of the child that restrains the thrusts from Spunky, because he is the one who responds to the emotional "do's" and don't's" of his caretakers even before he understands them, and he internalizes them. To that extent, Spooky represents the part of the child that contains the human equivalent of the biological instinct for self protection, but we refer to him as Spooky because he cannot discriminate between messages, and all those that he registers are taken in as though they were protective even if they are destructive. Spooky articulates and develops the injunctions that were previously introjected into Sleepy by means of the "survival" strokes of infancy, and he carries all additional "protections," even if they turn out to be undermining prohibitions about seeing, hearing, touching, feeling, thinking--and so on. ("Feeling" can include feeling angry, or fearful, or gleeful, or sexual; "thinking" can include being lucid, creative, expressive, investigative, successful.)

He is told: "Hear no evil, see no evil, etc., . . . ." and "Don't TOUCH!" . . . "BE STILL!" . . . "If you . . ." etc., "The Boogey Man!" . . . "The fires of Hell!" He also internalizes messages representing the other extreme; we call them the "crazy" licenses to: "Go Ahead and Get Into Trouble (GAGIT) (Ex.: Smiling parent: "OK, baby, touch the fire and see how you like it!" or: "Wait 'til you find out about men!").

Of course, the overt intent of the chronological parents who offer "GAGIT" licenses or constricting prohibitions is not necessarily malevolent. Often, they, themselves, are harassed. Some of these harmful prohibitions come from their own misguided Parent Ego-State, some come from their unhappy or scared or crazy Child Ego-State. Sometimes, they, themselves, are bound in a disastrous script that leads them to want to escape frightening injunctions they carry in their own Child Ego-State by passing them on to a sacrificial scapegoat; a process called "episcripting," which can be illustrated by Abraham's having been willing to kill his son, Isaac, when he subserviently believed he could please God with a sacrifice.

Be that as it may, Spooky is the part of the Child Ego-State that carries protective imprints and permissions, but also archaically introjected destructive injunctions, constricting prohibitions, and GAGIT licenses. Colloquially, they are all referred to in TA as "witch" or "troll" messages for the bad ones, and "permissions" or "fairy godmother" and "kindly wizard" messages for the good ones. Spooky has the capacity for fear and shame, and their offspring: panic, anxiety and inhibition. It is these feelings that will later mobilize him, on a time schedule, to implement the "witch messages" with which he is programmed. They will activate him to operate during the whole life-span of the individual in accordance with "decisions" that he makes before age six under the duress of utter dependency. These may turn out to be detrimental to the person in the future, but they are arrived at, with his child's mind, to promote what look

to develop an overall pattern or structure for the future which will accommodate the very divergent pulls and directions they each represent. These divergent pulls do not cancel each other out, because they are not processed logically or scientifically. The young child's mental system is very different from the adult's, as has been demonstrated by Piaget. It can maintain, side by side, totally contradictory combinations of feelings, thrusts, and beliefs, which is why, for the purpose of discussing their relative impact, we have personified them as Sleepy, Spunky and Spooky. The child thinks "syncretically" by pulling together incidental analogies, coincidental juxtapositions and approximations of imagery. This process serves Spunky well, because it leads to creative combinations and quick flashes of intuition unhampered by ponderous deductive logic. But this also leads to "magical" cause and effect conclusions, whereby Spooky establishes "decisions" for the future that can lead the whole person to disaster.

Material for the content of the script comes from the environment. This material includes whatever the child sees and hears that he understands or misunderstands, including fairy tales, cartoons, animal stories, Bible stories, TV shows, and stray remarks that he takes literally, such as "it breaks my heart . . ."--"you'll be the death of me . . ."--"you'll end in Hell!"--"curiosity killed the cat," and so on. Reality and fantasy are all interwoven. Witches, trolls and ogres, dangerous dragons spewing fire, spells, curses, magic pitfalls and escapes, kindly wizards, beautiful fairies and genies that grant wishes--they are all just as believably existent and likely to appear in his life as are gurgling water from a faucet, sudden fire from a match, people who understand strange words, or rivers, mountains, or superhighways that he might have seen in pictures or on TV before being on them "for real." By means of a complex, back-and-forth process of "equilibration" (such as is described by Piaget in explaining the development of concepts in the young child), he establishes the overall structure of his future. One



like the optimal chances for survival in the context he is in. And, later in life, though in a totally different context, he will feel compelled to implement them.\*

These decisions will have become articles of faith; they are based on the edicts of the Deities! Woe to him who disregards them.

The impetus for a script emanates from the Spunky part of the child, to meet his inborn zest for life and "time structure hunger"--i.e., a need to identify for himself the boundaries and road signs for the journey of existence that he is so strangely thrust in. It evidences itself in the relentless questions young children ask: "Tell me a story . . ." "What, why, when, where"--on and on. They are the questions that boggle philosophers. The poor five-year-old is seeking the answers to the Riddle of Existence. He wonders: Who am I? and Where am I? . . . What shall I do tomorrow? And Tomorrow? and "ever after"??? . . . What is it that the arbitrary Gods on Olympus have decreed? What says the Delphic Oracle????

The Spooky part of the child also needs a structure within which to bind the decisions he has made, well or ill, to ensure survival according to his lights.

In uneasy alliance, Sleepy, Spunky and Spooky strugg

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\*Footnote: If the reader has difficulty accepting this principle, consider that this phenomenon can be demonstrated experimentally by hypnotizing someone (i.e., influencing him while he is in a helpless Child Ego-State) and having him later feel unexplainably "driven" to proceed with irrational behavior that he doesn't remember having agreed to under hypnosis.

day, he hears a fairy tale or an animal story, or he sees a TV cartoon, and: it fits "just right." The inchoate structure or configuration of his life now has a general visual and verbal form--the script is born. It represents Spunky's forward drives and aspirations, and it also contains Spooky's inserts--the protective messages and permissions that were given to him, combined, unfortunately, with whatever "witch" and "troll" messages came along, too. These include his concept of the "injunctions" that came non-verbally, plus the more recent prohibitions and GAGIT licenses, and his own sell-out compromises, i.e., his "decisions." There is also a dreaded "penalty clause": ("You'll see what happens . . .")--the unspeakable curse that might come about if he fails to operate according to the survival "decisions" to which he has committed himself.

The three personifications of the Child combine in filling out their own version of the story, finding slots and symbols for what each thinks is important, and establishing the "cast of characters" that represent future relationships;--the "good" ones and the "bad" ones. Is it any wonder that children relate to fairy tales that have complicated ups and downs in the adventures of the hero or heroine? A collection of Sleepy's regressive wishes, Spunky's forward, adventuresome drives, and Spooky's controlling decisions must be accommodated in the same tale!

Now the child recognizes himself: Yes, that's me, all right. Now I know the answers I sought; I can see how my life will go. Oh, then that's my fate? All right; well, maybe with just a few changes here and there? And . . . this is it. At this young age--before six--the child has established a script whereby he himself structures and predetermines his future in a pattern and direction that he will later experience as his "luck" or "fate" or "destiny."

As the child grows up, the selected tale appears to be forgotten, because new thought structures are being

developed--the Parent system, then the Adult system. But the basic plot remains in what now appears to be a more unified Child Ego-State. This same Child Ego-State, one day, in the adolescent or later, "turns on" to a more complex story--a myth or a novel or a biography or a movie. Once again comes the feeling: Yes, that's mine. It surfaces as a strong--often surprising--emotional reaction to the plot, or to the hero, or to the villain. The individual might not realize it but, couched in new, more verbal symbols, here is the theme he selected in his forgotten past--during the life he lived once upon a time, long, long ago, in another, magic realm--the three-to six-year-old realm, which was ruled by the all-powerful, giant Gods.

Sometimes, patients can recall the outline of a favorite fairy tale of their childhood, sometimes they can relate the later, adolescent version; examination reveals that the theme reverberates in their lives and that the fantasied ending of the story is predictive of their destination in life. That's because the marvelous, imaginative, but sometimes terrified little girl or little boy of five or so, who is now barely remembered but who lived so intensely long ago in that special realm--that young child is not just relegated to dusty photo-albums or to the "unconscious" of dreams--that child, complete with magic thinking, lives, breathes, feels and thinks in the present in the guise of the Child Ego-State, excited or panicky, creative or intimidated, demanding to be heard, pulling and tugging at the individual this way and that way, and by default, "tricking" him into implementing the dramatic script of a tale he set up in the past, for performance in the future. Often, this tale is exciting, promising adventure, thrills, and solutions; sometimes it is drab or sad or tragic. In such cases it is essential that the grown person, who now has powers he did not possess at five, re-orient his script drastically into a different direction by evaluating Spooky's decisions and beliefs in the light of his present reality and by "redeciding," with his Adult, what are his true prerequisites for autonomous survival, intimacy and creativity. And that's the purpose

## of Script Analysis.

It is important to note at this point that, at about the age of three, even before making up his life script, the child establishes his "existential" position according to how he is being treated, and this position becomes the cornerstone for relationships that are structured within his script.

Berne lists four possible existential positions that determine how a person will feel about himself and others. They are:

1. I'm OK, You're OK.
2. I'm not OK, You're not OK.
3. I'm not OK, You're OK.
4. I'm OK, You're not OK . . .

to which this author has added a fifth, to wit:

5. I'm OK, You're OK--SOBER--the position acquired after the confrontation and acceptance of reality.

Everyone is born a prince or princess, said Berne, but he might become convinced that he's a frog, stuck in a dinky pond. Actually, it is impossible to sanely maintain the early "princely" OK position, for it is one of utter innocence in the Garden of Eden--and even a well-cared for infant has difficulty sustaining it because of the helplessness he experiences when all his needs and omnipotent wishes are not met.\* During

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\*Footnote: This process is beautifully elaborated by Melanie Klein and her school.

the developmental period when they are still insufficiently differentiated from their caretakers, children are flooded to a varying degree with "I'm not OK, You're not OK" feelings ("The whole world is rotten, including me."). Some unfortunate people remain stuck in this position on a spectrum that ranges from remaining autistic to developing a script that calls for "omnipotent" expression through homicide, or "helpless" expression through slow, hopeless death (in Skid Row or the back ward of a mental hospital).

At the other extreme there are some fortunate children who, already by age three, have been supported towards future autonomy by being offered consistent acceptance and the protection of safe boundaries for dealing with the primitive rage that everyone must go through in recognizing the ineffectiveness of omnipotent wishes and in experiencing frustrations. Such children establish a "princely" "I'm OK, You're OK--Sober" position, and they proceed towards a "success" script, based on feeling "born lucky."

For most people, the childhood experience is neither so horrible that there is no way out of the "I'm not OK, You're not OK" feelings, nor so fortunate that the "I'm OK, You're OK" feeling can be readily established. Because all children experience the "I'm not OK, You're not OK" feelings in infancy, most children ward off the hopelessly terrifying "I'm not OK, You're not OK" feelings by means of a defensive position: they either take the Not OK burden onto themselves, and maintain hope in salvation (I'm not OK but you are, so help! oh Great One!) or they project the Not OK outwards (I'm OK but you're not; all would go well if people would only listen to me!). One of these two positions is chosen at age three, and it becomes the basis for the script. Because both of these positions are defensive positions, they can sometimes appear to see-saw. This is the impression Stella gave when she went for the quick Game pay-off with George. As we shall see, Stella was desperately warding off a profound "I'm not OK, You're not OK"

position by trying to play her "unhappiness" Racket out of an "I'm not OK, You're OK" position, but even this defensive position was crumbling as she was moving more and more into an "I'm OK, You're not OK" position as she was implementing her tragic script.

In script analysis the goal is not necessarily to change the whole script--or even to understand it in detail--rather, it is to help the patient identify the pattern of his script and to extract from it dangerous "witch" or "troll" messages or harmful "decisions" if they are steering him to disaster. These changes help realign his existential position to: "I'm OK, You're OK--SOBER," and from there he can, himself, later expand the creative aspects of his script.

There are numerous ways of getting to the pattern of a patient's script; sometimes we use a "script matrix"--i.e., a diagrammed outline with which patient and therapist work to bring into open, verbal "translation" the patient's early non-verbal transactions and messages. (For instance, "crooked stroke" programming in early childhood can be identified very fast during transactional analysis when the patient shows inappropriate affect--if he smiles in relating an unhappy experience or if he looks sad when he is being praised. This indicates that, before he can remember, his Child introjected affect from a parent that did not correspond to his own emotions, and some of the early messages can be deduced from that.) Sometimes we use techniques of modified psychodrama or of Gestalt, or specially guided art work, or, often, we ask about a favorite fairy tale or myth.

Stella remembered hers as follows:

Once upon a time there was a beautiful girl named Rapunzel. A witch shut her up in a high tower, away from the world. The witch brought her food by climbing up on the plaits of Rapunzel's long golden hair. One day, shortly after the witch left, the king's son, who was riding by, quickly climbed up on Rapunzel's plaits

before she pulled them up. At first, she was scared, but then she agreed that he could go and bring her some skeins of silk for a ladder on which she would descend and join him. However, the witch came back and discovered the plan before he returned, so for punishment she took Rapunzel away into the wilderness, where the poor girl lived in even greater grief and misery.

Stella could not remember much more except for something to the effect that the prince kept seeking her, but in the process he got blinded by thorns, and Rapunzel remained in the wilderness, weeping and crying for years and years.

This story ties in with Stella's early childhood experience; the witch, her mother, feeds her but on condition that she be alone and depend on her for "food." The prince (father) is ineffective in rescuing her--in fact, his finding her leads to worse for Rapunzel (wilderness) and he, himself, ends up worse, too. Even though Rapunzel is "beautiful" and attracts a prince (the Spunky Child hope of the story), the outcome is sad and implies that she should have obeyed the witch.

Since the goal of script analysis is to figure out predictively where the patient is heading so he can reconsider harmful decisions, we look for the directional thrust of a script by asking about additional favorite or impactful stories of later years, or biographies, plays, novels, etc.\* Sometimes the patient can think of a character in a myth, legend or Biblical tale (children's fairy tales often have their equivalents in such myths; they represent, in language or drama that grown-ups use, the range of dilemmas that all young children deal with in their own pre-adult conceptualizations).

Stella recalled having been intrigued by the story of Scylla, which she had run across in an English class. She summarized it as follows:

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\*See "Three Story Exercise" on page 229 of this volume.

One day, Glaucus, the handsome sea-god, half-man and half-fish, saw the lovely nymph Scylla when she went bathing. He fell in love with her, but, even though he called out to her that he was a god, Scylla would have none of him. In despair, Glaucus asked Circe, the enchantress, for a love-potion with which to melt Scylla's heart. Instead Circe poisoned the water in which Scylla went to bathe. As soon as she entered the water, Scylla was changed into a frightful monster. Out of her body grew serpents and fierce dogs' heads. She remained rooted to a rock in her unutterable misery, hating and destroying everything that came within her reach, a peril to all sailors who passed near her.

Here, again, is the theme of the lovely girl who can attract a handsome god, but he, like the prince, is scary and blemished (half fish) and he is ineffective in doing anything for Scylla; like Rapunzel, Scylla gets hurt by a powerful, malevolent woman, the witch Circe, because of him. For both Rapunzel and Scylla the outcome is loneliness, although Rapunzel, at least, has the witch to feed her. The progression from one story to the other is not encouraging, prognostically, for, whereas Rapunzel herself does not become transformed for the worse as a result of meeting the prince (except that she's weeping and crying after losing him, as Stella did after her father was evicted) Scylla becomes not only unhappy, but also monstrous and dangerous. We can see here how the one early "Spunky" aspect of the script, Rapunzel/Scylla's glowing attractiveness to a man, is destroyed by the poison of the witch Circe, so that the heroine proceeds tragically not only to loneliness, but also to hateful, "rooted" (immobilized) monstrosity.

Was this the outcome Stella was heading for? Stella's current transactions were moving her into it. She was desperately trying to replay the old Racket on an "I'm not OK, You're OK" position with a phony "Nurturing Parent" who reproduced the witch, but since these were the only kinds of strokes she was allowing



herself to register in the "now," she did not get enough. Most were crooked anyway, since partners in these Rackets increasingly became exasperated due to the persistence of her not OK whining which they eventually saw as exploitative. This led to increased frustration which she vented with increasing velocity by means of her Games against men.

The Games also discharged Stella's anger at her father's desertion and her accumulated rage and frustration at her mother for depriving her of basic survival strokes but, in the present, they were simply cutting her off from positive stroke exchanges! In this way, Games are predictive about the direction of a script, and they advance it. The acceleration and intensification of Stella's NIGYSOB and Blemish Games with men was evident in her present life and in the current treatment situation. She was increasingly enacting Scylla's transformation, becoming "a peril to all sailors who passed by," by turning away her boyfriends, John and David, and, in the group, Bill and George. All were stand-ins for her "blemished" father (the prince and Glaucus).

An important aspect of both stories is that neither heroine took any initiative. Each was passively and helplessly "run" by others (witch, prince, Glaucus, Circe). Diagnostically, this is significant. Most stories, even tragic ones, carry some forward action or enthusiasm initiated by the hero or heroine who represents the Spunky Child, even if he is thwarted in his attempts. But here, even in fantasy, Stella's Spunky Child didn't dare risk anything positive; not even a response to being admired by the prince/Glaucus; there is only passive sorrow and, eventually, "rooted" hatefulness. This confirms the idea that, in early childhood, Stella had no viable leeway for the spontaneous expression of genuine feelings. She was enjoined, non-verbally and verbally, against expression, or even awareness, of frustration or anger at her mother on whom she depended for nurture, even though it was witch food, and she received no continuing response or protection

from her father, towards whom it did not pay to show positive feelings, especially in the presence of her mother, for fear of death (by ultimate, utter deprivation of strokes). There lay the curse. Stella's pathetic script was warding off, in her Child mind, an even worse fate if she dared transgress the compromise that the script represented. "Die" was the underlying injunction that had come non-verbally in infancy from the Child in Stella's mother. As an infant and toddler, Stella had struggled against it, desperately surviving on whatever crooked strokes she eked out from her mother's guilty Parent when she was crying with colic or what-have-you. (This was the foundation for the unhappiness Racket which she was currently replaying, but it was not sustaining enough.) Even though some "erratic" strokes had come her way occasionally from her father (thence the passive yearning for the prince) he failed to offer her enough. Somewhere between the ages of three and six, Stella must have discovered that continuous whining, which was probably her principal early way to elicit strokes, was losing effectiveness in gaining her the strokes she desperately needed, and that affection to her father, who was mostly in an alcoholic stupor, got her very little. But good strokes could be gotten from the mother's Parent and Child by attacking her father (Go away, Daddy, drunk!). This was the closest Stella could get to expressing her feelings and receiving unambiguous strokes, coming, as they did, from both the mother's Ego-States (Child and Parent). Thence, the original impetus for her Games. With reasoning typical of a five-year-old, Stella's Spooky Child had made a "decision": "The only safe way to survive and to vent some feelings is to renounce and reject men, even if I become monstrously scary and mean to men like my father, for they give very little and they only frustrate and endanger me"(as father's Child sometimes did, by goading her into provoking her mother, who then threatened to leave her). The two stories Stella told us represented two versions of her childhood script. It contains Stella's Spunky Child hope that a loving man will find her, even though she may not take the

initiative. However, it is Spooky and her perverted "survival decisions" who is mostly represented in the progression from one story to the other. The change from Rapunzel's outcome to Scylla's reflects the father's eviction when Stella was five or six, but it also predictively confirms that, unless she could now "redecide" about survival issues and how to express feelings, Stella's life would keep becoming worse. Under our eyes, right now, she was deliberately developing her tragedy into the future because her Spooky Child was holding on to the archaic belief that she dare not transgress the decision, not even in small ways, lest the curse (Death) take effect, the "die" message being the basic one she had received as an infant from her mother's Child.

Even within the protected boundaries of the treatment group, Stella consistently refused to acknowledge any feelings of annoyance at the (female) therapist even when the therapist's Adult crossed Stella's Rackety Child-Parent transactional attempts, which happened repeatedly. No wonder! The "I'm not OK, You're OK" defensive position which she had established with her mother was warding off the rage and despair of an early "I'm not OK, You're not OK" position that she had struggled to crawl out of. She could "never" be mad at the "nice" therapist with whom she steadfastly maintained an "adapted Child" posture. She had to please the witch. Meanwhile, with her accelerating Games, Stella was systematically destroying all possibilities of enjoying nourishing straight positive strokes from any man to whom her Spunky Child was attracted, the way she did with Bill and George, and, after more and more desperate attempts to maintain her defensive Racket (perhaps by becoming a Lesbian, as she "jokingly" indicated), she would end lonely, hateful and immobilized in an "I'm not OK, You're not OK" position comparable to the one she was trying to ward off by refusing to acknowledge genuine here-and-now feelings.

When Stella came into treatment, the contract was

to cure increasingly violent migraine headaches that had been developing in the past few years; neurological findings had ruled out a brain tumor. In the light of what we now see, this symptom is not surprising. An epic battle was going on in her head; the "Anti-Script" and Racket combined were less and less able to ward off the cancerous growth of the tragic script.

"Anti-Script" (or Counter-Script) is, as the name implies, a life pattern that an individual with a bad script clutches on to past childhood, after he has internalized verbal, overt instructions (versus injunctions) from parental figures, often the Parent Ego-State of the same parent whose Child is responsible for the destructive injunctions. Often the Anti-Script supports a person for a long time by offering daily activity, but when there is an underlying tragic script, eventually the tragic script pattern takes over because of the manner in which the individual is transacting with people.

As she was growing up, Stella had had encouragement from her mother educationally. Stella had been a docile, all "A" student. Her Anti-Script led her to function well in school, and she had become a conscientious schoolteacher. But the headaches were becoming so incapacitating that she feared for her career. Not long before entering treatment, Stella had shifted from a school with a very "sympathetic" (female) principal to one where she was having many difficulties with the "incompetent" (male) principal, even though he praised her work. This change had, of course, accelerated the thrust of her script, although she did not understand how, at the time, and simply "blamed" him for adding to her daily problems.

It was clear that straightforward transactional analysis or any other form of treatment was not sufficient in order for Stella to learn how to transact honestly with men--and women--without the Rackets and Games that would leave her hateful, isolated and immobilized. What was needed was nothing short of full

reversal of the tragic decisions of her script by means of a "redecision."

For a patient like Stella to implement this "redecision" is not easy, because of the lack of early permissions for any spontaneity. This was in contrast to Bill who, in childhood, had been allowed a certain amount of awareness and expression of some spontaneous feelings, even though others were discouraged. Therefore, when, in the treatment group, he was consistently confronted with the fact that some of his reactions and transactions were being anachronistically steered by his Parent Ego-State rather than by straight responses to the "now," his Adult had increasingly registered this and had supported his Spunky Child in experimenting with other ways of transacting. He had gradually become able to discard phony alleged "protective" beliefs without feeling endangered, and this is why it had been unnecessary for him to go through Script Analysis. When it came to Stella, the archaic conclusions lay, not only in her Parent Ego-State, but also deep in her Spooky Child, a part of the very Child Ego-State through which a person feels alive. If she risked honest emotions and straight transactions, the very process that might cure her, her Spooky Child profoundly believed that she would die. She simply did not dare.

The dilemma is well illustrated by Tennyson's poem, The Lady of Shalott (another favorite of Stella's). The Lady of Shalott is cursed; she may not go out into the world; she is in her room, and protects herself from temptation by never looking out the window; she sees the passing scene only through a mirror. But, one day, in the mirror, she sees Sir Lancelot; he is so handsome that she forgets her vow, and she moves to see him from the window. "She left the web, she left the loom. She made three paces through the room . . . She saw the water-lilies bloom . . . The Lady of Shalott." The sight of life propels her further. She leaves her room, but suddenly she feels it: "The curse is upon me! . . . cried . . . The Lady of Shalott." And, indeed,

the poem ends tragically; the dead lady's body is floating down the river.

For Stella, too, might such a curse take effect if she dared? This is not just a frivolous rhetorical question. It explains why there are people who have psychotic breaks or car accidents or suicide attempts following certain "peak" experiences in (non-TA) groups run by "charismatic" leaders who might overly enthusiastically promote "risk-taking" without awareness that a constricting, or even a tragic script decision might be warding off an even worse penalty clause or GAGIT licenses.

Nevertheless, if the risks are clearly computed, as in a case where surgery is indicated, the crazy "decision" imbedded in the script must be extracted forcefully. If the magic belief is very profound, as in Stella's case, magic must be counteracted with magic. The witch must be exorcised. To do so, under the authority vested in her by the treatment contract previously established with the patient's Adult, the therapist puts on a "Merlin"--i.e., she takes on a "magical, all-powerful" Parental role with which she deals with the patient's Spooky Child, communicating that she (the therapist) is more powerful than the old witch, who is now way off in the six-year-old realm, whereas the therapist is here to protect the Child now. The Child is reminded that she has a new guardian of her very own; her grown-up body which enables her to use physical mobility and elementary know-how to obtain the means of survival for her present life; food, clothing, shelter and real live strokes. When she was young and helpless, she had to sell out for these; now she can get them on her own. "Permission to feel what you feel!" roars the therapist. "Permission to know how you feel! Permission to seek out and recognize Real Strokes! Permission to LIVE!" and, very important: "Permission to NOT HURT YOURSELF!" It is this latter permission that must be given and repeated with the most force--for in cases like Stella's the other permissions might be taken as licenses to "Go Ahead and Get Into Trouble"--

(licenses that Stella got from her father's Child) and they might implement the dreaded curse.

The therapist must be capable of communicating Protection to the scared Child of the patient. The protection must be more formidable than the perverse "protection" of the witch who would compel her to do herself in for transgressing the old messages. To be more effective, the therapist's Adult must have computed, first, precisely what is the purpose of the intervention, so there is no contamination of motivation in the therapist; thereby throughout the process she can maintain full confidence in her professional potency. That's not the same as omnipotence, even though, for a very brief while, it might be useful for the patient to see it as such, as long as the therapist herself doesn't feel grandiose and is ready, very soon, to transfer to the patient's Adult, the temporary "power" she establishes over his Child. In this she is helped by the fact that the other members of the treatment group, who are at other stages of their treatment, are not at all awed by the therapist's "Merlin" Parent. Yet, if what's involved is well understood by the therapist (and often also by other members of the group), it is possible to make full "magic" impact on a particular patient's Spooky Child, right within an ordinary TA group setting which is usually conducted on a more rational basis. With Stella, the very fact that the therapist had previously refused to play the artificially sympathetic mother role in the "unhappiness Racket" gave additional credence and leverage to her attack on the "magic" of the "witch messages" and on the anachronistic decisions they had fostered in Stella's Spooky Child. Thereafter, the therapist could offer valid, truly sympathetic protection to all of Stella's presently terrified Child.

While in the temporary parental role following the "exorcisms," it is very important for the therapist to openly check out hazards and protective boundaries in the patient's current life, in a manner comparable to a chronological parent talking to a minor in regard to

physical safety. The energetic, emphatic permission to Not Hurt Yourself is often spelled out by actually discussing with the patient's Adult (who is there although the Child is unwilling to admit it) necessary elementary rules about car-driving, alcohol, or other realistic hazards that the patient is currently exposed to. Various sub-contracts are established about such matters. In fulfilling these sub-contracts, the patient's Spunky Child recognizes more and more that it is his own Adult that is offering him protection in reality, rather than the therapist's Parent. He can afford to drop his active belief in magic, be it in that of the therapist or in that of his own archaic "witch messages" which were only perversions of what should have been original protective messages. Having experienced the use of his Adult in practice, he does not need to keep turning to his Parent, either, in order to offset the panics of Spooky. So he can decide what parts of his Anti-Script are useful nevertheless, and he can also allow the creative aspects of his script to grow.

While this takes place, therapist and patient must be prepared for the fact that the process shakes the patient's defensive existential position; the primitive "I'm not OK, You're not OK" feelings are revived. He will experience rage and despair to a greater or lesser extent at this stage. Often some additional work is needed around the surfacing of these feelings. Paradoxically, this crisis is the fore-runner of success; the patient fights acknowledging it, but he does have tools to deal with the frustrations of reality that he did not have as an infant. He has an Adult.

The crisis relating to her position was terrifying to Stella, but relatively short lived. It included violent rage at the therapist, but she did emerge with an "I'm OK, You're OK--Sober" position. She developed more awareness of true feelings and learned to deal with them in the here-and-now, rather than cover them with artificial whining. With that, she started having more "straight" transactions and good stroke exchanges



with women and men, without having to "pay a price" as she did in the opening session when she felt "compelled" to cry and turn pathetically to Gina right after Bill's Child offered her a positive stroke. Her headaches "just disappeared" and, more important, it became clear, from her transactions in group and from her friendships outside, that she was no longer implementing her tragic decisions; rather, her Spunky Child was growing creatively along with her ability to develop more intimate relationships.

We have presented Stella's Script Analysis and Redecision process in some detail because this is, as yet, a new discipline requiring careful training and supervision. It is born out of Transactional Analysis; for it would be impossible to work accurately and safely with a patient's script without thorough grounding in Second-Order Structural Analysis of Ego-States, and the diagnostic checks that come from identifying the significance of specific transactions, Rackets and Games.

Berne himself got to elaborating script analysis only a few years before his death; he felt, like his followers, that there is much yet to be researched on the basis of more clinical experience. Still, it opens the way for predictive work with patients--and one's own self--such as could not be contemplated before. Also it offers a challenge, not only to therapists and their patients, but also to the social scientist who concerns himself with social control and with the determinants of man's fate.

Behind script analysis lie the profound existential dilemmas of Man:--What is destiny? What is freedom? What is autonomy? Script analysis limits itself to dealing with those aspects of his fate and autonomy that a person does determine for himself; it turns out that there are many more than we used to believe.

Second Order Structural Analysis, with its careful

distinction between the three parts of the Child Ego-State and its identification of the divergent pulls they represent for each person in the Now, opens up the possibility for study of man's creative activity in a way that could not be done before. The dilemmas illustrated in Stella's case apply to us all, to a greater or lesser degree, in regard to how, when and why Spunky's expansive enthusiasm for life is inhibited (or triggered into danger) by Spooky's archaic imprints and how the total Child Ego-State, then, in desperation, turns to the anachronistic Parent Ego-State for support instead of using the tools offered by the Adult.

Even without understanding Second Order Structural Analysis, the mere differentiation of here-and-now personality into Child, Parent and Adult, and the concept of transactions between differentiated Ego-States, has been of enormous service to vast numbers of people in all fields of communication. It has been a "heady" experience for many people in both meanings of the word simply to know that we can choose the Ego-State to respond with or to feel in, at a given moment, rather than feeling "made to" respond in accordance with old patterns.

As a method of therapy, Transactional and Script Analysis include both a "rational" and an "emotional" humanistic approach. We delve into deep feelings and do not hesitate to use fantasy techniques at selected points of treatment (for instance, the author used some Gestalt to help Stella surface deep rage at her mother), but we maintain the TA principle that, sooner or later, the patient must be given the opportunity to fully understand with his Adult what is involved. It is his Adult, not the therapist and not his Parent, who will, preferably, determine his choices, preferably in the service of his own blossoming Child.

The advantage of Transactional Analysis as a method is that it is clear, direct and effective. Patients can identify Ego-States and transactions just as well

as therapists, and they soon can, themselves, evaluate what is going on. So therapy is de-mystified, and the activity of the therapist herself is openly scrutinized. Her contract is to maintain her Adult (whereas patients are encouraged to free their Spunky Child) and patients can keep ongoing tabs as to whether she is operating usefully or not. This, in itself, represents major progress in psychotherapy.