

“The Adult is Parent to the Child: TA with Children & Young People”
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Chapter 17 Bringing Up the Child: The Importance of Functionally Fluent Parents, Carers and Educators
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This chapter looks at child rearing and growing up from a particular TA perspective. The ‘functional fluency’ model of human social functioning (Temple, 1999, 2004) is used to illuminate issues of human psychological development and to highlight the benefits of positive and enabling child rearing relationships. Upbringing is a relational process unique for each individual, in which what we do and how we do it can either support a positive growthful dynamic or hinder it. The question is, as Chess and Thomas (1999) put it, ‘How good is the fit between the child’s capacity and dynamic of growth and development and the carer’s provision of challenge, stimulation and support?’ Maintaining a good fit requires on-the-ball sensitivity and know-how along with empathic acceptance, firm guidance and creative ways to enjoy and share in the process alongside the child. In TA language, this means parenting from Integrating Adult, as the title of this book implies. Functional fluency is a term for the ‘Integrating Adult in action’ (Temple 1999). The functional fluency model was developed as both a behavioural diagnosis of ego states and a practical framework for learning how to build positive relationships. It is a tool for enhancing emotional literacy (Steiner 1999, Antidote 2003). In education, it helps people make sense of both intrapsychic and interpersonal dynamics so that they can maintain objectivity more easily and jump to conclusions less. This means that they are more likely to stay in charge of their responses, even when there is aggravation or anxiety, which in turn promotes positive communication. The model is presented here as a way to understand the effects of parenting behaviours and how to make them as helpful as possible.

What do we mean ‘upbringing’?

As human beings are born entirely helpless, they need prolonged care and protection to survive. The maturation process into adulthood takes many years, and in some cultures, such as our own, is prolonged past the stage of physical maturity and ability to survive, pair up and reproduce. As complex social animals, we have much to learn about how to relate to others and function as a productive member of the social group, whatever form that may take. We also need to learn much knowledge and many skills in order to fend for ourselves and provide for our own well-being and eventually for that of our children. Upbringing should provide that learning. The knowledge, skills and understandings needed vary immensely from culture to culture. Some of these variations are obvious and are linked to factors such as geography and climate. For example, consider the different learning necessary for the peoples of the Arctic circle and those of the Congo basin. Some of the variations are subtle and are more to do with tribal history and the psychology of the group concerned. However, the fundamental learnings necessary for all human beings are similar in essence – how to make or acquire shelter, find and produce food, protect water supplies and maintain the environment (Brody, 2001). Above all, as we are social animals and almost always live in groups, we have to learn how to co-operate and collaborate. As Hogan, Hogan and Trickey (1999) note, what human beings need to know is how to get along and get ahead. Succeeding in this is often termed being psychologically well adjusted. Upbringing, therefore, includes not only the passing on of knowledge down the generations, but also provides the relationships within which the children and young people develop their respective identities and abilities to relate to others in the social group.

Cultural and historical variation

Variation of cultural styles is immense. Different groups emphasise different priorities and follow different belief systems for making sense of their motivations and experiences. They care for their infants and prepare their young people for adulthood in different ways according to those belief systems and the various pressures for survival. For most of our evolutionary history, it has been the norm that infants are in physical contact with a member of their family day and night. Closeness has been a given. Human beings have grown up in small groups rarely coming across anyone whom they do not already know (Rowe, 1999). The norms of the group and the skills to be learned have been passed on by example and experience through the activities of the family and the group. In some cultures children are still cared for from a young age by barely older siblings. In industrialised countries with massed populations children are grouped according to age and are cared for during the day by specially designated carers, usually women. In many cultures going to school has become a 'normal' part of being educated and teachers do much upbringing. Children's total education, however, has always been, and always will be, the life they lead; and they learn, as ever, by example and experience from those who take responsibility for them. The times and ways in which children are expected finally to take responsibility for themselves vary hugely according to custom and necessity.

From the point of view of survival, human social behaviour is concerned with both the physical realities of life and the psychological dynamics of relationship. Mature social functioning includes the assessment of current reality for practical and relational problem solving, personally motivated energy output and energy output on behalf of others. Upbringing itself, therefore, has the same three-fold focus. There are many questions to be answered. The main one is: "Does the child benefit from the upbringing he or she receives?" There are others: "Will the child survive – even thrive?" "Is the child cherished and supported, encouraged and inspired in ways that enhance a positive unfolding of identity?" "Does the child steadily achieve the competencies necessary and develop the confidence and motivation to launch out into adulthood, to be able to cope, earn a living and build positive relationships?" "Will the child be able 'to get along and get ahead'?" "What are the key features of an upbringing that would make all this more likely?"

The functional fluency model is a tool for consideration of these issues.

The functional fluency model

A model for illustrating these matters and addressing these questions needs to apply to humanity in general and to work across cultural differences. It must be rooted in issues to do with survival of the species. No matter the geographical location and physical conditions for living; no matter what cultural differences there may be, human beings use their energy socially to grow up, survive and raise their young. These most basic matters are more fundamental than personality factors or traits, and intrinsic to the human condition (Gopnik, Meltzoff & Kuhl, 1999). The functional fluency model is a coherent framework for making sense of what we observe and experience in terms of growing up, surviving and upbringing.

It is these three categories of functioning that form the basis of the functional fluency model at a 'comprehensive construct' level. Kelly (1963) explained that complex concepts are layered, each level in turn becoming more precise and specific. The following three diagrams (Boxes 17.1, 17.2 and 17.3) show the three levels of construction of the functional fluency model. Each level is important in its own right as well as being a crucial part of the make-up

of the final model of behavioural modes. Level one has three categories. Level two has five elements and level three has nine modes.

Level one

Level one comprises: social responsibility and self-actualisation. These three generalised categories are fundamental to our humanity and form the most basic level of the model (Box 17.1).

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	<p>This is about UPBRINGING and the role of BEING IN CHARGE carrying AUTHORITY</p>	<p>This is how we use our energy on behalf of others in terms of: - grown-up self responsibility - parental responsibility - professional responsibility for others, maybe temporarily.</p>
REALITY ASSESSMENT	<p>This is about SURVIVAL and being “WITH-IT”</p>	<p>This is the basis for how we respond to life, here-and-now, moment by moment.</p>
SELF ACTUALISATION	<p>This is about GROWING UP and BECOMING MYSELF</p>	<p>This is how we use our energy on our own behalf. It is to do with identity and self- expression throughout life.</p>

Box 17.1 Functional fluency model Level 1: Three categories of functioning

This first diagram shows the overarching generalised first level of constructs. In these three broad areas of social functioning we can say that we use energy on our own behalf, on others’ behalf and for staying in contact with current reality. In considering our use of these three categories, we can estimate and compare our balance of energy between them. Is it even, or is there an imbalance? Do any imbalances reflect the demands of the current life situation?

Social Responsibility

An important factor about this category is that it incorporates learned social roles that vary from culture to culture, for instance the roles of mother, father, teacher, guru, captain, leader, manager, etc. Many cultures systematically provide for their young people opportunities to try out and practise roles of being in charge, so that they are ready to take on the social responsibilities of adulthood when the time comes. Another factor is that we use energy in this category of functioning in three ways:

- Directly and actively on behalf of others so that they experience being guided and looked after.
- In modelling how to fulfil the roles, so that others learn about them by example.
- As an internal process of self-control and self-care, which is how in adulthood people take on the responsibility for guiding and looking after themselves.

Self-actualisation

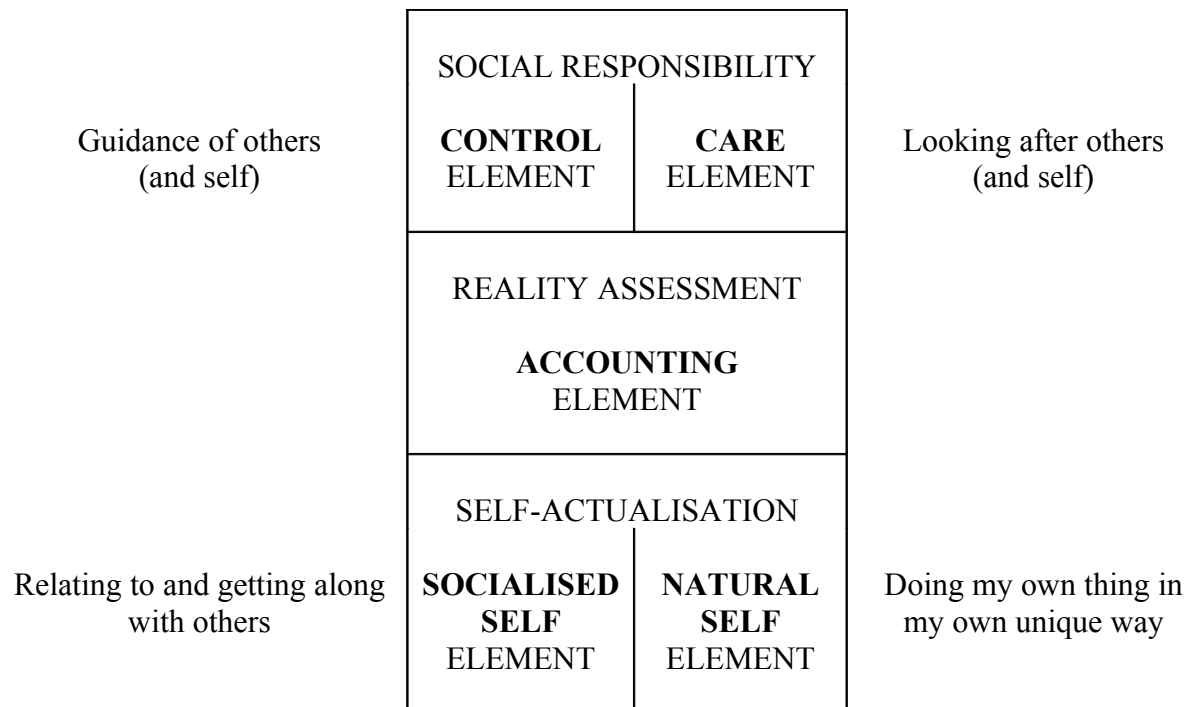
The category of functioning called self-actualisation relates to child and human development. It is to do with identity formation and expression of self.

Reality Assessment

The third, central category of reality assessment, is directly about survival. It refers to a person's reality-testing facility for monitoring inner and outer current events, gathering and using data from internal processes including accumulated knowledge and experience, and externally both via the senses and by actively seeking information.

Level two

At this second level of the model, the categories of social responsibility and self-actualisation are divided into two elements. The category of reality assessment stays as a single element and is given the name 'accounting'.



Box 17.2 Functional fluency model Level 2: Five elements of functioning

This second diagram, with the next level of subordination of constructs, reveals how this model echoes certain traditional transactional analysis ego state diagrams. It is vital both to understand the conceptual link with ego state theory and to realise that the functional fluency model is not another model of ego states! It is a model of *human social functioning* that provides a behavioural diagnosis of ego states. The key aspects of this second level are that all the five elements belong to the same level of abstraction and are value free. This important five-construct model is therefore conceptually consistent and logically derived, without qualitative bias. It is important to note that no worthwhile measurement can be made using this level of abstraction because of the multidimensional nature of the constructs (Neuman, 1994).

Control and care elements

The two elements of social responsibility, control and care, delineate the two main areas of responsibility we take on when we are in charge of other people, whatever the context. The control element is about the responsibility we have for guiding, directing or steering those in our charge, also for providing appropriate expectations and boundaries for them. This requires decision-making on their behalf. The care element is about the responsibility for providing for their needs appropriately, for being available and responsive or “there for them” in order to offer unconditional strokes and recognition for being.

Socialised and natural self elements

The division of the self-actualisation category into two elements highlights the issue of nature versus nurture. The natural self element is about the use of energy in expressing individual uniqueness by “doing my own thing in my own way”. It is an individualistic and uncensored use of energy. The socialised self element is about the use of energy for relating to and getting along with others. The combination of elements in this category is about personal potency.

Accounting element

At this second conceptual level, the term for the use of energy in reality assessment is ‘accounting’. As a term this is a double metaphor and key to how the model works. Firstly there is the mathematical connotation concerned with the organisation of data. Secondly there is the connotation of ‘story-making’: the fact that we are continuously construing and re-construing our own inner meanings, our own personal ‘accounts’. This double metaphor relates strongly to Piaget’s (1954) terms, translated from the French as ‘assimilation’ and ‘accommodation’, that he used in explaining aspects of children’s learning. Accounting is an internal process giving a means of staying grounded in the here-and-now through awareness. Higher order thinking skills are needed to process the data available in order to assess significances, potential consequences and to compute resulting options. Accounting is learned and develops according to capacity of age and stage of cognitive functioning.

Level three

At the third level, the elements are divided once again, so that control and care, socialised self and natural self, all have both a positive and a negative mode. Accounting element, however, being an internal, value-free function, is different. It remains undivided and is called a mode at this third level, making nine behavioural modes in all (Box 17.3).

Negative control DOMINATING MODE	Negative care MARSHMALLOWING MODE
Positive control STRUCTURING MODE	Positive care NURTURING MODE
Accounting element ACCOUNTING MODE	
Positive socialised self COOPERATIVE MODE	Positive natural self SPONTANEOUS MODE
Negative socialised self COMPLIANT/ RESISTANT MODE	Negative natural self IMMATURE MODE

Box 17.3 Functional fluency model Level 3: The nine behavioural modes

These nine modes of the functional fluency model are the unidimensional constructs that are suitable for measurement (Neuman, 1994), and that are used in the psychometric tool The Temple Index of Functional Fluency (TIFF) (Temple, 2002). The nine behavioural modes are arrived at by asking certain questions with respect to the five elements (Box 17.2).

The question to ask with respect to care and control is “Do people benefit from the care and control used, or do they suffer from it?” In order to explore answers to this, it is necessary to divide both elements into a positive and a negative behavioural mode and to name and define each carefully. Thus there are four social responsibility modes: nurturing, structuring, dominating and marshmallowing.

The question for the socialised and natural elements of self is: “How effective are these two ways of functioning?” or, to be more precise, “What sort of satisfaction and recognition do I achieve by doing my own thing in my own way?” and “What are the outcomes of my efforts to relate to other people?” Again, for further exploration, it is necessary to make a positive and a negative mode for each element, so that there are four self modes: spontaneous, cooperative, compliant/resistant and immature.

In this model the term accounting is used at both element level 2 (see Box 17.2) and mode level 3 (see Box 17.3), as reality assessment is not divided. The issue with accounting is different from the other elements. It is primarily a quantitative matter. The question is: “Is there enough accounting going on in order to be effective, whether on my own behalf or on behalf of others?” An excess or a deficit of accounting is counterproductive. An excess of energy used up in internal processing makes it harder to get on and take action, while a lack of taking relevant factors into account may mean that action is unrealistic. An important point to note is that accounting is a value-free internal mechanism. Evidence for this emerged from the range of factor analyses of the research data from the pilot studies of TIFF (Temple 2002). Whatever the nature of the activity undertaken, whether it is for good or ill, an effective outcome requires sufficient accounting. In order to reinforce the use of accounting for achieving positive outcomes, it is presented and taught as one of the positive modes that will be of benefit to people and cause no harm. There are, therefore, five positive modes in the functional fluency model. In practice, these modes are now sometimes referred to as the ‘Fabulous Five’!

The two pairs of negative modes can be thought of as sourced from the contaminated areas of Integrating Adult (Temple 2004). There, the functional fluency model is shown superimposed on the structural ego state model. The negative mode boxes then fall neatly over the Parent and Child contaminations. This suggests that dominating and marshmallowing modes are sourced from Parent contaminations and compliant/resistant and immature modes from Child contaminations. This, however, is somewhat simplistic, though likely, and useful as a basic idea. The reality is that any of the four negative mode behaviours could be derived originally from either Parent or Child contaminations. In-depth second order structural analysis of the respective Parent and or Child ego states within a therapeutic contract would reveal the details for a particular client. A diagram unique to that client could then be drawn up. For people learning about how to use the functional fluency model in educational and organisational contexts, it is useful simply to know that the negative modes derive from ‘old teachings and old learnings’ that we may still be using, even though they are out of date and possibly counterproductive. The process of learning how to transform energy used in those modes into use of positive modes involves the behavioural changes necessary for the relevant decontamination of Adult.

The social responsibility modes and parenting

The ideas for the four social responsibility modes were derived originally from ‘four ways of parenting’ (Illsley Clarke, 1978). To begin with the names were exactly the same, but the research showed that the name of the mode called ‘criticising’ needed to be more generalised, and that ‘dominating’ was considered to be a more useful and appropriate term. So now the name for negative control in the functional fluency model is the ‘dominating mode’.

These four modes form neat pairs. They can be considered from the point of view of the two positives and the two negatives, or from the point of view of the two control modes and the two care modes (see Boxes 17.4a and b). It depends on the purpose: whether one is considering the effectiveness of ways of being in charge, or two differing aspects of being in charge. It is important to realise that everyone uses all four modes at some time: we all have good and bad days! We may not realise which modes we are using, however, and one of the purposes of the model is to promote self-awareness.

Structuring Mode

This is the term for **constructive control**, which empowers through inspiration and by enabling success. Guidance and help are given so that people feel safe to explore, learn and gain self-confidence.

**The hidden message is:
“You can do it and succeed.”**

Nurturing Mode

This is the familiar term for **positive care** in action, which is responsive to need and offers the empathy and understanding that enables recovery and healthy growth of a positive sense of self.

**The hidden message is:
“You are loveable and valuable.”**

Boxes 17.4a and b The two positive social responsibility modes

It is important to understand the nature of all the modes and the fact that important ‘messages’ are conveyed at the psychological, or ulterior, level of communication: “It ain’t what you say, it’s the way that you say it”! The positive message of structuring is a permission, and that of nurturing an affirmation or attribution. Structuring and nurturing need to be thought of together. For positive parenting both are essential and need to be combined. This combination is extremely close to the style of parenting identified in the longitudinal studies by Baumrind (1991) as most closely associated with effective outcomes for the children. Baumrind’s term for this combination was ‘authoritative parenting’ (Table 17.1).

Authoritative Parenting	With this parenting children tend
Exercises firm control. Communicates standards of conduct in a clear manner. Does not hem in the child with excessive restrictions. Uses reason and explanation in achieving their objectives. Demands relatively high level of achievement. Encourages verbal give-and-take. Respects the child’s own wishes. Involves high levels of warmth and frequent expressions of affection.	To be more self reliant. To be keen to achieve. To be socially responsible. To be content. To be self-controlled. To be co-operative with both adults and peers.

Table 17.1 Authoritative parenting style and resultant tendencies in children (after Baumrind (1991))

It is important to note that Baumrind found that this most effective parenting style was warm and affectionate as well as having firm, clear expectations and boundaries. Similarly, the kindness and gentleness of the nurturing mode, along with the support and inspiration of structuring, have healthy and enabling effects on the recipients, who tend to thrive on the effects. There is an interesting phenomenon that Illsley Clarke has frequently pointed out in workshop settings: that, if nurturing is offered without some structuring to go with it, then the

effect is the same as being marshmallowed: sweet but not substantial and ultimately harmful. Similarly, if only structuring is offered with little nurturing, the effect is one of feeling dominated. Positive upbringing, parenting or internal support consists of a balanced combination of these two modes, with the combined hidden message “You are lovable and capable”.

The two negative modes of social responsibility, illustrated in boxes 17.5a and b, are often used with the best will in the world and good intentions.

<p style="text-align: center;">Dominating Mode</p> <p>This is the term for destructive control, which disempowers through coercion and by focusing on the negative. It undermines self-esteem with criticism or put-downs, and may punish mistakes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The hidden message is: “You are not good enough.”</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Marshmallowing Mode</p> <p>This is a new term designed to express the soft and hidden harmfulness of negative care, which gives too much attention, or the wrong sort, and which does too much for people while lacking clear boundaries or expectations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The hidden message is: “You are inadequate.”</p>

Boxes 17.5a and b The two negative social responsibility modes

Sometimes this usage is simply because of a lack of understanding about what sort of parenting behaviour works best in a given situation and sometimes it is because the parents are simply following a recipe from the past, recapitulating behaviour ‘taught’ by example from their own past parent figures. These ‘old teachings’ can be ingrained and seem right and inevitable until they are considered objectively and consciously transformed through a process of decontamination of the Adult ego state. A new and different sense of control can be gained by using the empowering characteristics of structuring instead of the coercion of dominating. The inconsistency and overindulgence of marshmallowing can likewise be transformed into the compassion and kindness of nurturing. Most important are the hidden messages. When parents realise the covert, psychological messages of dominating and marshmallowing they find it easier to understand why the outcomes of these modes are so damaging, and why it is so important to structure and nurture instead.

The four self-actualising modes

These are known as the ‘self modes’. They are concerned with identity and self-expression, and are about how we use energy on our own behalf, both for doing our own thing in our own way and for getting along with others. Both natural self modes have free-flowing, uncensored behaviours, while the socialised self modes have been learned in response to environmental, especially social demands. Both elements have positive and negative modes.

	SOCIALISED ELEMENT	NATURAL ELEMENT
POSITIVE	<p>Cooperative Mode</p> <p>This mode is the result of useful social learning that supports a person's ability to relate appropriately to others from an I'm OK – You're OK position, with mutual benefit. It enhances the person's enjoyment of working and playing with others.</p>	<p>Spontaneous Mode</p> <p>This mode is the unrestrained, yet age- and context-appropriate, expression of a person's own unique liveliness and creativity. It enables playfulness at any age.</p>
NEGATIVE	<p>Compliant/Resistant Mode</p> <p>This mode includes the wide range of currently counter-productive social behaviours that are the result of previously learned ways to survive and get enough attention. They are the result of out-dated beliefs about self and need to be relearned.</p>	<p>Immature Mode</p> <p>This mode (in grown-up people) shows unrestrained self-expression inappropriate to age and context. The behaviours, natural to early childhood, have not yet been grown out of and interfere with adult social effectiveness. New learning is needed.</p>

Boxes 17.6a, b, c and d The four self modes

The four self modes do not relate in neat pairs. These modes are not the result of learned roles. They are the manifestation behaviourally of an individual's personal development. They can be considered as an illustration of a dynamic developmental spiral. The root of the spiral, naturally, is in the immature mode: we all start here. The natural behaviours of young children reflect their age and stage. They still see things only from their own point of view and find it hard to appreciate the future social joys of 'sharing' and 'taking turns'. Their rudimentary sense of time-keeping and consequence make it hard for them to delay gratification or understand how long a wait for something might be. Hence the familiar cry of "Are we nearly there now?" and "Is it my birthday today?" It would be accurate (but maybe unfair) to call the resulting behaviours 'egocentric', 'selfish', 'inconsiderate', 'unorganised' and 'reckless', as they are to be expected at a very young age and we know that it is likely that the child will grow out of them. We do *not* label the young child 'immature'; he or she simply *is* immature. However, supposing the child does not grow out of these behaviours, for lack of social opportunity, requirement, guidance or help, then the young person or adult still exhibiting them would rightly be said to be behaving immaturely. Such a conclusion would, of course, vary in the detail according to the cultural and social assumptions of what is expected and acceptable.

Upbringing and growing up combine in the continuation of the 'developmental spiral' because the nature of this spiral depends on the interactions and relationships the child has with her or his 'upbringers'. It is at this point that ideas of growing up and upbringing need to come together. The child needs to learn how to express his or her uniqueness and creativity from spontaneous mode, reflecting appropriately her or his maturity, so upbringing processes need to foster this individuality and help it to blossom and bear fruit. The child also needs to

learn the pleasures and satisfactions of skillful social intercourse using cooperative mode, so that she or he can build positive relationships of mutual benefit. Upbringing, therefore, also needs to support, model and assist this social learning. Upbringers who structure and nurture appropriately offer the affirmations and permissions that the child needs to build healthy self-esteem and develop increasing competence. Empathic acceptance and understanding are mixed with the inspiration of high expectations and reliable help and support. For instance, children are shown how to take turns and share as soon as they are ready; they are helped to perceive others' points of view and to enjoy being considerate and collaborative; their creativity is appreciated and encouraged and they are cherished for their uniqueness. The foundations of the 'I'm OK – You're OK' life position are lived in the relationship through the respect and congruence of the adults and are 'caught' rather than 'taught'. In short, the child needs to move from immature mode to a combination and balance of Spontaneous and Cooperative modes, avoiding Compliant/Resistant mode along the way (see Figure 17.1).

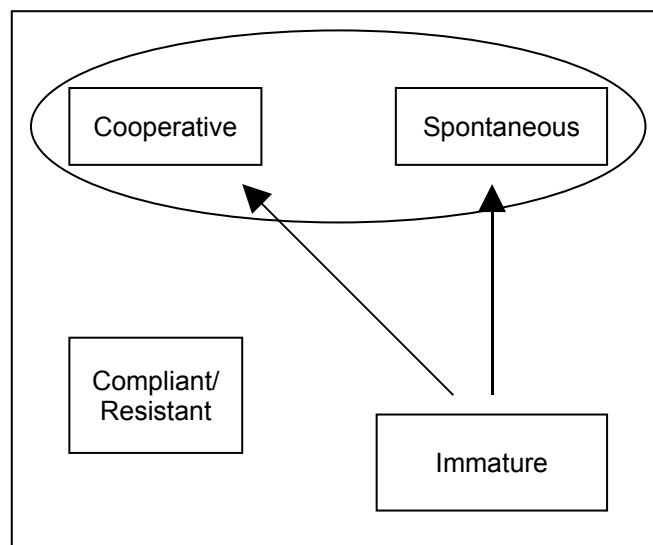


Figure 17.1 The journey from immature to spontaneous and cooperative modes

Habits of compliance and resistance are learned as self protection when the environmental and social demands are too great or too harsh for the child to cope with at that time. For instance, control may be more dominating than structuring. The habits so formed may need to be unlearned or relearned at a later date if the person doesn't transform them naturally as part of continuing growing up. On the other hand, the growing out of immature childishness may be hindered when care is of the marshmallowing variety and the child is stroked for, as Levin (1988 p.18) puts it, 'staying little'.

The upbringing behaviours for fostering and assisting children's use of spontaneous and cooperative behaviours come from structuring and nurturing modes, well informed by accounting mode, and supported by the personal relationship building attributes of cooperative and spontaneous modes.

In addition to encouraging cooperative and spontaneous modes, upbringers need to stimulate and stroke effective accounting stage by stage so that gradually the child develops appropriate higher order thinking skills that promote the cognitive development necessary for moving out of immature mode behaviour. The provision of appropriate experiences for building up knowledge and skill is also important for fostering the accounting mode of functioning. Meanwhile, the modelling of structuring and nurturing provides a continuous example (for

good or ill) of how to manifest these two modes. Later in life these absorbed examples will form the basis for how the person undertakes the social roles of “being in charge of others”.

Temperament as an important factor in growing up and upbringing

The journey from immature mode to spontaneous and cooperative modes and the development of accounting, structuring and nurturing mode skills will need different learning experiences according to differing temperamental dispositions (Thomas, Chess & Birch, 1968). From within the overall modes of structuring and nurturing will need to come a variety of permissions, requirements, encouragements, boundaries and limits. It is unrealistic to think that it is ‘fair’ to treat all children the same way.

Chess and Thomas (1999) emphasise the fact that the newborn baby already has a well developed temperamental disposition. Also, as Bower (1977, p.35) writes: ‘The newborn begins life as an extremely competent learning organism, an extremely competent perceiving organism’. What is needed is a ‘good fit’ between the child’s unique developmental needs, stage by stage, and what the upbringers provide so that the two way dance of upbringing and growing up supplies the right balance of demand and support for the child:

With goodness of fit of infant and carer interaction, the child, with increasing biological and psychological maturity, faces correspondingly complex expectations and demands of the environment. As these interlocking events mount, the child with successive goodness of fit experiences, develops self-awareness, self-esteem begins to emerge, motivations and cognition become clarified and competencies begin to declare themselves. (Chess & Thomas, 1999, p.46)

Thomas, Chess and Birch (1968) write about the term ‘goodness of fit’ as a principle for promoting change and expanding competence. They say that for optimal development in a progressive manner, the child’s own capacities, characteristics and behavioural style need to be in accord with the environmental properties, opportunities and demands. To start with, this is in the context of feeding, bathing, dressing and the playful exchanges and routines that are the stuff of infant-carer interaction, and later of relationship-building and the progressive mastery of the environment by the infant. Sensitivity, knowledge, understanding, intuition and knowing the child well all contribute to appropriately helpful upbringing responses. Accounting moment by moment helps upbringers to monitor, reason and decide how to use structuring and nurturing for a particular child in order to create and maintain the ‘goodness of fit’ as outlined by Chess and Thomas. Appreciation of the child’s temperamental characteristics, and sensitivity to the natural differences between children are vitally important in the process.

Thomas, Chess and Birch (1968) refer to temperament as behavioural style, that is, the child’s way of being in the world and of doing things. They delineated nine temperamental characteristics: activity tempo; rhythmicity; intensity of response; threshold of response; mood inclination; adaptability; response to novelty; persistence; and distractability. They pointed out that the initially identified pattern of these characteristics may be relatively unchanged, reinforced, heightened, diminished or otherwise modified by environmental influences during the developmental course. In other words they are not fixed. It is natural for a child to adapt to environmental demands; this is part of human survival. What is important is that the adaptation, or socialising process is in the child’s best interests and proceeds along with the development of his or her individuality. In functional fluency terms, as described above, it is important that both cooperative and spontaneous modes are fostered.

Difficulties arise when the environment is stressful to the child. Stress comes in two main forms: frustration arising from the child's natural pace being held back, and anxiety when the child is not ready to cope with particular demands. These are similar to the "Stay little" and "Grow up" messages, identified by Levin (1988), that interfere with children's naturally unfolding developmental progress. Understanding the functional fluency model can help all those who take responsibility for children's upbringing, and those in therapeutic roles helping people to recover from their respective upbringings, to avoid these stresses. Learning how the model works helps to raise awareness of the possible effects of the four 'being in charge' modes, and also supports appropriate choice of strategy for responding to children and young people in ways that help them to develop positively.

Key aspects of the functional fluency model

The functional fluency model provides a framework for understanding the dynamic relationships involved in good upbringing. Everyone uses all the nine modes at some time or other, because we all use care and control, socialised and natural elements and we all do some accounting. What we need to be aware of is the nature of our use of these elements, so that we can learn to use our energy for greater benefit and reduce the stress of wasted and inappropriate energy use. This is true whether we are using the social responsibility modes interpersonally on behalf of others, or intrapsychically on our own behalf. It is worth remembering that the ways we structure and nurture ourselves will impact on how we manage to structure and nurture others.

Some of the differences between the modes are subtle and it is these subtle differences that are of most importance in helping us shift from negative to positive behaviour. For instance, in terms of positive and negative caring, it is important to understand the difference between acceptance of the person (in nurturing) and over-tolerance of undesirable behaviour (in marshmallowing). Likewise, it is important to be clear that the authoritarian bossiness found in dominating mode is about exerting power *over* people, whereas the authoritative guidance from structuring mode is about using power *for* people.

With respect to the socialised and natural elements, firstly it is vital to grasp that cooperation is an 'I'm OK – You're OK' activity to be stroked and expanded, whereas compliance is an 'I'm not OK – You're OK' activity and needs transformation into assertiveness. Secondly, natural spontaneity is different from impulsiveness. Spontaneity includes the maturity of awareness and choice, whereas impulsivity is more simply an instant response to a stimulus, which, in adults, is a sign of immature behaviour patterns.

Another important difference is between certain aspects of the two negative self modes. On the one hand is the learned rebelliousness from compliant/resistant mode, and on the other hand is the oppositionality natural to the toddler stage of development. Oppositionality, when considered with respect to adult functioning, belongs in immature mode. The model thus helps us to understand that rebellious behaviour needs to be dealt with in a different way from oppositional behaviour. The former needs to be unlearned and transformed into assertiveness and personal potency and the latter needs to be grown out of. Age, stage, context and relationship will all have important bearings on the strategies to be used.

With regards to accounting, doing more of it than is necessary for a situation can be a sign of defensive cognitive patterns such as obsessing. Doing too little accounting may be a clue to discounting mechanisms or simply a lack of knowledge or of skill in how to think productively. Increasing the relevant knowledge and skill necessary for a person who is struggling to problem solve can enrich the accounting process and make it easier and more

effective. This in itself can reduce discounting so that whatever problem is being addressed is solvable, and the whole strategy helps to avoid pathologising. Accounting is the key mode for masterminding choices between the other eight modes. This requires some understanding of the nature of all the modes, both positive and negative manifestations.

The five positive functional fluency modes can be thought of as the ingredients of integrated and effective social behaviour which is also psychologically well-adjusted. Theoretically we can separate out the modes in order to explore meanings and improve our understanding of different aspects of behaviour. In practice, however, these ingredients are blended and balanced in varying proportions in order to respond appropriately to the situation. Learning about the model in detail can help us to enrich and expand our use of the positive modes and also to learn how to transform our use of the negative modes.

Functional fluency is especially important for parents, educators and all those of us who take responsibility for upbringing in one way or another. Children and young people are learning all the time, whatever we do or don't do, from both our example and the experiences we offer them. Increased self-awareness and understanding supports our sensitivity and perception of their needs so that we can develop our 'response-ability' and enhance the 'fit' we offer between upbringing and growing up.

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