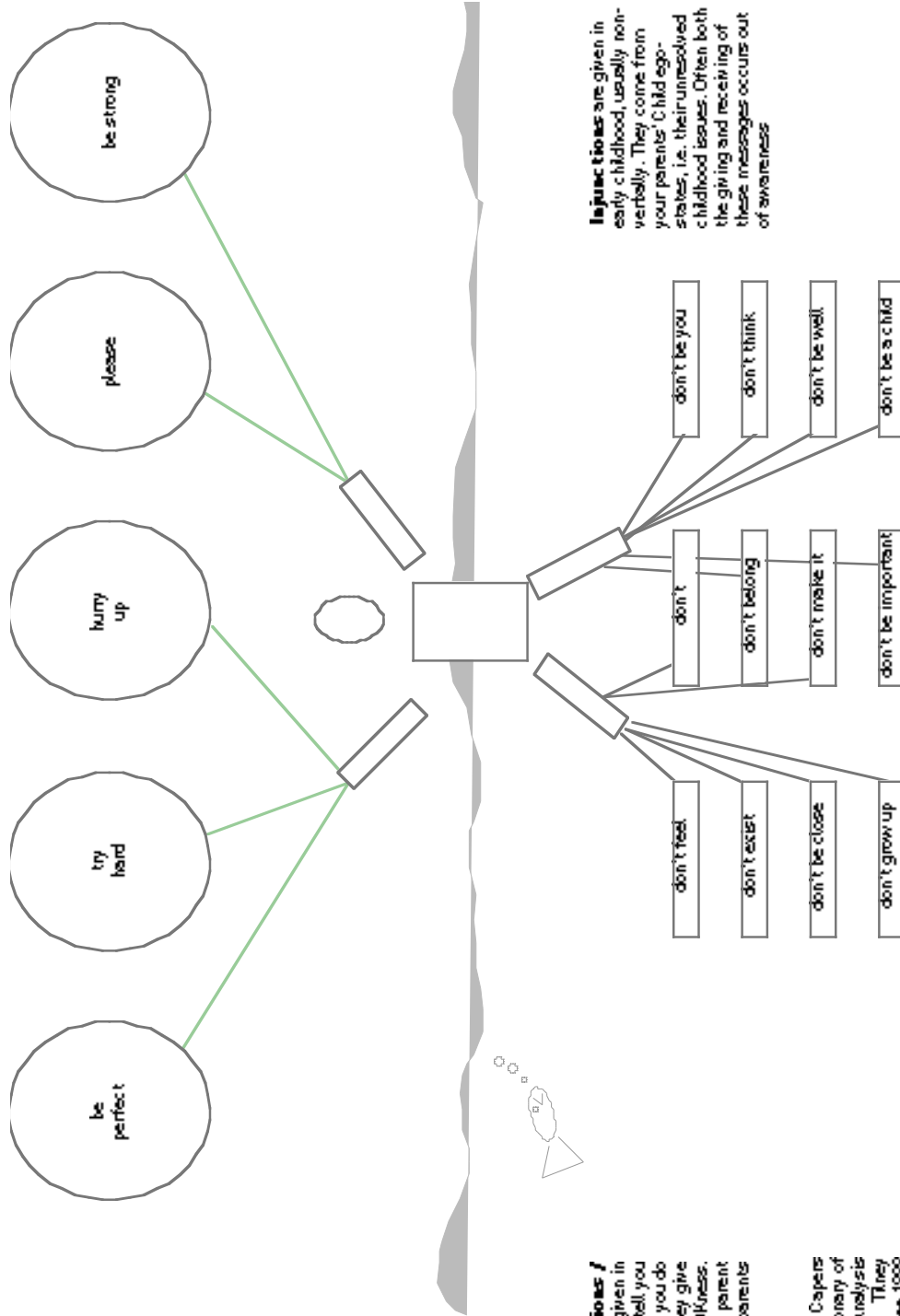


DRIVERS



Counterjunctives / drivers. These are given in later childhood and tell you that you are OK if you do certain things, i.e. they give you conditional O.Kness. They come from the parent ego-state of your parents

Kahler and Capere
from Dictionary of
Transactional Analysis
Tilney
Adrienne Lee 1988

Injunctions are given in early childhood, usually non-verbally. They come from your parents' Child ego-states, i.e. their unresolved childhood issues. Often both the giving and receiving of these messages occurs out of awareness

BE PERFECT

Your parents sent and you accepted the message that you would be OK with them **if you were perfect** or didn't make a mistake. Often this message came across as "you should do better" or "you can do better" or "you're brighter than that". Did you ever achieve a personal goal, report it to your parent(s) only to be told "You can do better"?

A person acting out this driver will physically look tense, stern, eyes looking up for the perfect answer/question/facts, stroking the chin, steepling the fingers, and perhaps finger counting the points being discussed. The Be Perfect person will speak in a well modulated, professional and measured manner perhaps sounding righteous with a clipped tone of voice. Favourite words include: of course, obviously, clearly, probably, and possibly. When speaking or writing, the person will attempt to convey the message perfectly, of course with clear enunciation possibly with multi-syllabic language.

This involves a quest for perfection, no errors, everything must be exactly right first time.

Our major strength is our reputation for producing accurate reliable work. We check the facts carefully, we prepare thoroughly and we pay attention to details.

Our written work will look good because we aim for perfection in layout as well as content.

We are well organised, we look ahead and plan how to deal with potential problems. We are not taken by surprise but have contingency plans ready to put into effect.

Our projects run smoothly and efficiently with effective co-ordination and monitoring of progress.

Unfortunately we cannot be relied on to deliver on time as we need to check it so carefully for mistakes and this takes time.

Because of our concentration on how something looks, we are likely to call for a whole series of relatively minor changes to layouts. Our concern about being seen to be wrong means we are reluctant to issue a draft rather than the final version, so opportunities for incorporating the ideas of others may be lost

We are likely to misjudge the level of detail required. We include too much information and have the effect of confusing the recipient.

Our reports become lengthy; our sentence patterns also suffer whether we are writing or speaking and add bits in parenthesis and use technical or long words.

There is a danger that we end up doing everything ourselves because we do not trust others to do it right. We apply our high expectations constantly and fail to recognise when a lower standard would be appropriate and acceptable. This makes us poor delegators and may earn us a reputation for demotivating criticism.

On the other hand when we recognise the errors in our own work we may well feel worthless and not good enough even though others are satisfied with our performance.

The Be Perfect carries the coffees on a tray. The rally Be Perfect has a napkin on the tray to pick up any spills.

They never saw the wood too short as they check the measurements several times with a range of different measuring tapes, find they get different results and postpone cutting the wood at all while they write to complain to the manufacturers of the measures.

TRY HARD

Your parents sent and you accepted the message that you would be OK with them **if you tried hard**. Often this message came across as "you should try harder" or "you didn't try hard enough". So you've been trying hard at everything ever since. Nothing you do is taken on in the easy way. If given the choice you prefer being tested to prove your worth. Physically you have vertical lines extending up from the bridge of the nose on the forehead or a slight frown/grimace - because it's hard. You'll sit forward and be attentive with fingers placed on the face beside the eyes or on the jaw just under the ear. You might gesture with a clenched fist. You will use the following phrases: it's hard, I can't, I'll try, I don't know, difficult, huh?, what's that? You also will have a tight stomach, and tense shoulders. A common situation is for a person also to have the injunction Don't Think. The combination becomes: "Don't Think but you'll be OK with me if you Try Hard", so rather than pausing and spending time gathering data and planning, you prefer jumping right in and just trying. You won't finish sentences and won't finish something as you'll want to keep things going. The voice may sound strained and pressured.

The Try Hard is all about the effort put into the task, so we tackle things enthusiastically. Our energy peaks with **something new** to do. People value motivation and the way we have of getting things off the ground. We may be popular with colleagues in other sections and with customers or clients, because of our enthusiastic approach to problem solving. Managers especially appreciate the fact that we often volunteer to take on new tasks.

Because of our interest in anything new and different we may well be noted for the thorough way in which we follow up on possibilities. Given a project to undertake, we will identify a whole range of ramifications and implications that should be taken into account. The result is that we pay attention to all aspects of a task, including some that other people have overlooked.

However, we may be more committed to trying than to succeeding. Our initial interest wears off before we finish the task. Managers begin to realise that we are still volunteering for new projects even though we have not completed any of those tasks given us previously. Our colleagues may come to resent the fact that we do the early exciting parts of a project but then expect others to finish off the boring, mundane, detailed work.

We may fail to finish also because we spread our interest over too broad a range. Our attention to so many aspects makes the job impossibly large. Even if we complete most of it we may still think up yet another angle to pursue before we can really get that the job is done. This a small straightforward task may be turned into a major exercise, creating havoc with the time schedule. We miss the deadline or hand in a report full of items that are largely irrelevant. It is as if we are secretly making sure we do not succeed, so that we can just keep on trying.

Our communication with others may be pained and strained, as we frown a lot while we try to follow them. Our own sentences are likely to go off at tangents because we introduce new thoughts just as they come to mind. The listener becomes confused and bothers about the constantly changing content and about judging whether we have finished speaking. Sometimes we string questions together so the listener has to 'try' and sort out what to respond to. When asked questions, we may well answer a different question - a skill used deliberately by politicians but not so useful when it is outside our awareness.

Try Hards forget they were going to collect coffees because something more interesting occurs on the way. Or they will stop to oil the door when they hear it squeaking - so the coffee gets cold.

They change their mind about what the wood was for anyway and they may have several half-built items. Or they decide to redesign the saw or build a better workbench. They end up with lots of unused saw marks!

HURRY UP

Your parents sent and you accepted the message that you would be OK with them **if you hurried**. Often this message came across as "you'll never get it done" or "you're too slow" or just "Hurry!". Hurry Up people move quickly with a jerky, staccato tendency. They have a frown and darting or shifty eyes. Often squirming, tapping fingers or bouncing the legs up and down in an impatient or fidgety nervous manner they find waiting around is very uncomfortable. They talk quickly running one word into another. Favourite phrases are: Hurry, Let's go, Come on, Are we done? They like to be on the go and have several concurrent projects, juggling many balls in the air. They have little time to feel their feelings. These are the people who drive and perform other functions at the same time: shaving, makeup, reading a book, using a phone. But hey have to keep moving (snapping fingers on both hands) you can rest after you're dead.

Work quickly and get a lot done in a short time. We achieve huge amounts. We respond well to short deadlines and our energy peaks under pressure. We actually seem to be enjoying having too many things to do. If you want something doing give it to a busy person.

Our motivation is to do things quickly we feel good if we complete tasks in the shortest possible time. We look for the most efficient way to do work in the hope of shaving even a few minutes off each task. We spend less time preparing than others do giving us chance to meet more people and contribute more to the team.

Give us time to spare and we delay starting until the job becomes urgent - then we start to work on it. This can backfire because in our haste we make mistakes. Going back to correct the mistakes takes longer than doing the job right the first time so we may miss the deadline after all. The quality of the work may be poor because we have not left enough time to check it over or improve it.

Our urge to save time may be inappropriately applied to everything we do, instead of being reserved for those tasks where it will make a real difference.

Our ability to think fast may lead us to appear impatient. We speak rapidly and have a habit of interrupting others. We may even finish their sentences for them, often misunderstanding and getting involved in needless arguments.

Our body language reflects our impatience through fidgeting, tapping with our fingers or toes, looking at our watch, and perhaps even sighing or yawning ostentatiously.

Our appointments get planned too close together, so we rush from one to another, arriving and leaving early. We are likely to turn up to a meeting having left the necessary paperwork in our office; we may even fail to arrive because we didn't stop to check the location of the meeting. When we do arrive, others must wait while we are given a summary of what we missed.

Our constant rushing coupled with an emphasis on task efficiency may prevent us from getting to know people, so that we feel like an outsider

We approach a door that opens towards us, while we are carrying two cups of coffee. Most people would put one cup down, open the door go through, put the cup down and then return to fetch the second cup. We juggle! Usually it's quicker. Every so often it's a lot slower because we have to stop to clean up the coffee as well.

Saws a piece of wood too short because you didn't check the measurement carefully before you sawed.

PLEASE OTHERS

Your parents sent and you accepted the message that you would be OK with them **if you pleased them**. Often this message came across as "you are not good enough unless you please me" or "don't be selfish". Please Me driven people tend to be accommodating and compliant, easy going and often labelled as thoughtful. They might think they can mind read other people's thoughts or feelings and needs, which they subsequently attempt to satisfy. If asked by a spouse what they want, a frequent response is "Oh I'm not fussy, whatever you want is fine with me." Physically they have worry lines on their foreheads, raised eyebrows, a tendency to nod and smile while listening, and a tense tight stomach. In a whiney, squeaky voice they prefer the phrases: you know, could you, can you, kind of, OK by you, should I, what did I do, with their voices rising at the end.

Please Others are good team members. We enjoy being with other people and show a genuine interest in them. Our aim is to please other people without asking. We work out what they would like and then provide it. This working style means we are nice to have around because we are so understanding and empathic. We use intuition a lot and will notice body language and other signals that others may overlook.

We encourage harmony within the group and work at drawing the team closer together. We are the one most likely to invite the quieter members into the discussion so that their views are shared. This is especially useful when someone is not airing their concerns and might otherwise remain psychologically outside the group. At the same time, we are considerate of others' feelings and will not embarrass or belittle them.

Unfortunately, this style can have serious drawbacks because of our avoidance of the slightest risk of upsetting someone. We may worry so much about earning approval that we are reluctant to challenge anyone's ideas even when we know they are wrong. We may be so cautious with criticism that our information is ignored. Our own opinions and suggestions are so wrapped around with qualifying words that we seem to lack commitment to them.

We spend a lot of time smiling and nodding at people to indicate our agreement with them.

Our own views are presented as questions only, with us ready to back off if they do not like what we are saying. Our facial expression is often questioning, with raised eyebrows and an anxious smile. We may be seen as lacking assertiveness lacking critical faculties, lacking the courage of our convictions.

When criticised by others, we may take it personally and get upset even when the comments are worded constructively.

Because we are reluctant to say no, we let people interrupt us and we are likely to accept work from them instead of concentrating on our own priorities. We hesitate to ask questions because we feel we should somehow know the answer, only to find out later that we've not done it the way they wanted. Our attempts to read people's minds often result only in us feeling misunderstood when they do not like the results. Please Others fetch the coffees frequently. They also open doors for other people who are carrying the coffees, even those with only one cup to carry who could open the door themselves. Please Others rush to open the door long before you reach it with your coffee - or offer to carry the coffee for you anyway.

They want to know if you approve of the way they are about to saw the wood.

BE STRONG

Your parents sent and you accepted the message that you would be OK with them **if you were strong**. Often this message came across as "you can't let them know you're weak" or "don't show your emotions- that's being weak" or "big boys don't cry". 'harden your heart, be a tough guy, become insensitive, keep going, when the going gets tough the tough get going', has appealed to those people in a challenge - and to everyone acting under the Be Strong driver. Physically these people seem impassive, cold, hard, rigid, and numb. They sit with legs crossed, arms folded, hands rigid while speaking in a hard, crisp, flat monotone. Their favourite phrases are: no comment, I don't care, this bores me, the thought strikes me that, situations like this ...depersonalised language, 'it came over me, it seems like'.

Be Strong people stay calm under pressure. Without his working style we feel energised when we have to cope. because we are so good at dealing with stressful situations, we are great to have around in a crisis. We are the ones who will keep on thinking logically when others may be panicking. we seem to be able to stay emotionally detached from the situation enabling us to problem solve around difficult personal issues and to deal efficiently with people who are angry or distressed. We are able to make 'unpleasant' decisions without torturing ourselves with guilt about the effects of those decision on others.

Because we are so good at staying calm and dealing with all that the job throws at us, we are seen as consistently reliable, steady workers. Our strong sense of duty ensures we will work steadily even at the unpleasant tasks. As supervisors, we are likely to handle staff firmly and fairly. We will give honest feedback and constructive criticism. We stay even-tempered so that people know what reaction to expect from us.

One problem with this style is that we hate admitting weakness - and we regard any failure to cope as a weakness. So we get overloaded rather than asking for help. We may disguise our difficulty by 'hiding' work away; often our desk looks tidy but correspondence is filed away in a rather large pending tray. We may be highly self-critical about our shortcomings, as well as seeing it as weakness if other people ask for help.

Colleagues may feel uncomfortable about our lack of emotional responses. This may be especially pronounced in those situations where most of us would feel the strain. They may suspect that we are robots rather than human beings. It can be hard to get to know us when we seem to have no feelings. Occasionally someone with this style will appear to be very jovial and friendly. However this will be a mask that prevents anyone from getting to know the real person beneath the superficial layer of jokes.

Our communication may reinforce the barriers to getting to know us. We are likely to use passive rather than active voice - 'it occurred to me' rather than 'I thought'. We may depersonalise ourselves 'one often does' rather than 'I often do'. Our voice may be monotonous or dispassionate, our face may be expressionless. The observant person will spot that our smile does not extend from our mouth to our eyes. Deep down, we fear that we are unlovable so we avoid asking for anything lest it be refused.

Be Strongs are very matter-of-fact about having coffee. They get coffee when they are thirsty. They carry only one cup because they get it for themselves. This means opening the door is not a problem.

Neither is sawing a piece of wood. Be Strongs never have problems - they specialise in coping with anything. If the saw breaks and cuts them, they apply a tourniquet and finish what they were doing before driving themselves to hospital!

COUNTERSCRIPT - TELL YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING:

BE PERFECT

- set realistic standards of performance and accuracy
- practice asking yourself what the consequences really are - do this whenever you find a mistake
- make a point of telling others that their mistakes are not serious

TRY HARD

- stop volunteering
- make a plan that includes finishing a task - and then stick to that plan through to a conclusion
- check out the parameters of a task so that you do only what is expected

HURRY UP

- plan your work in stages
- concentrate on listening carefully to others until they finish speaking
- learn relaxation techniques and then use them regularly

PLEASE OTHERS

- start asking people questions to check what they want instead of guessing
- please yourself more often and ask other people for what you want
- practice telling other people firmly when they are wrong

BE STRONG

- keep a task and time log so that you can monitor your workload
- ask other people to help you
- take up a spare-time activity that you can really enjoy