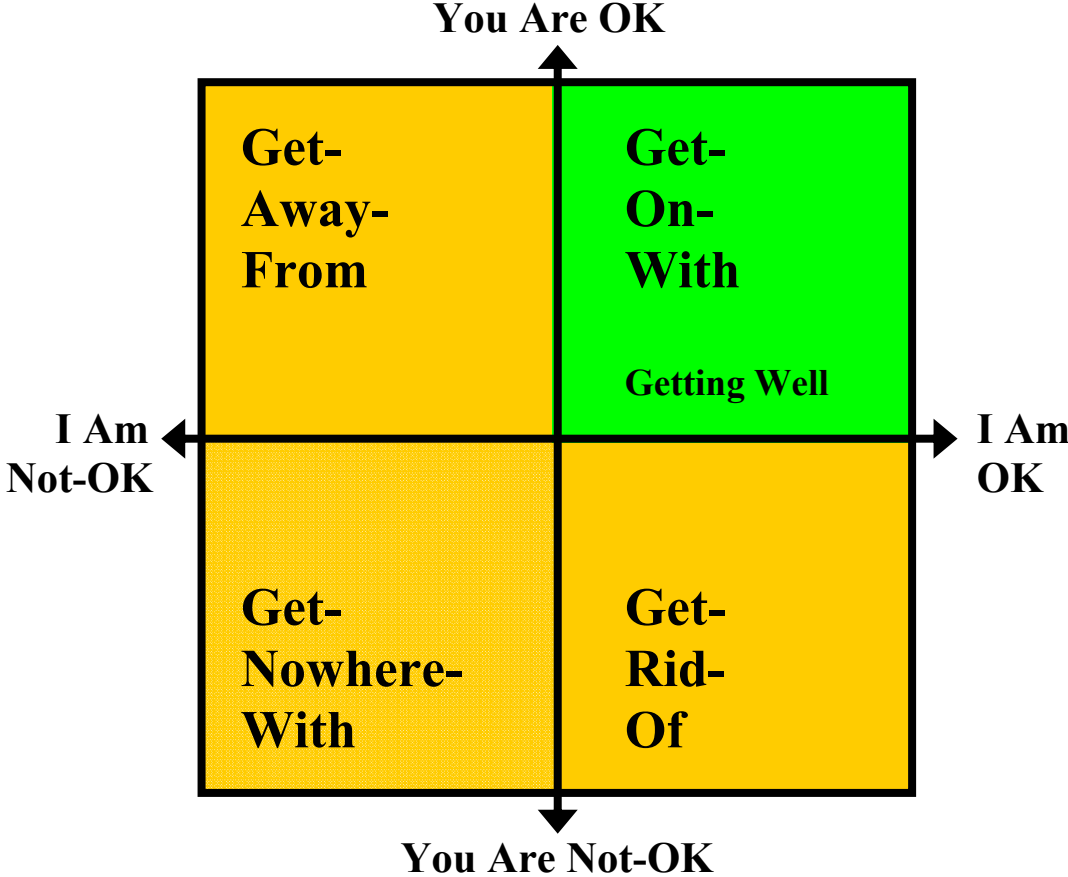


Getting Well With Transactional Analysis

Get-On-With, Getting Well and Get (to be) Winners

by

Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D.



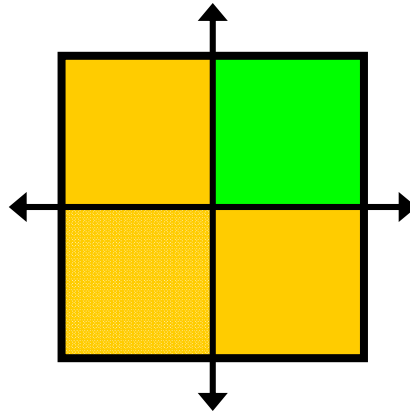
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by

Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D.

A life time has 2 to 2½ billion seconds depending on whether a person lives to be 67 or 83 years old. It is within this amount of time that getting well and being a winner in the selected arena of life will occur. Getting well is defined in this paper¹ as getting more efficient use of one's time of life.

Each person, in the act of "being a people," is possessed of a variety of conflicting, diverse and divergent qualities of reasoning-feeling. These include the multitude of activities-inactivities with which to spend one's "time of day." Putting it differently, the man who gets the most of what he wants with his time and in his encounters with other persons is the one who

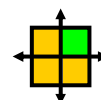
- (1) has decided on his goals and makes a commitment to these objectives;
- (2) then specializes in the use of his time toward the end of his perfecting techniques useful in obtaining his goals;
- (3) uses these techniques and his time to get to his goal;²
- (4) uses the fullest range of the other (personality) qualities within himself at appropriate times and as these latter are adaptable toward his goals and then finally;
- (5) gives satisfaction to his other life sustaining drives in a manner and at a time that will least detract from the attainment of his ambitions. In getting-well a person becomes a winner.

The first business to becoming a winner is the decisive commitment to the goal. In treatment, this is the commitment to the get-well contract.

¹ Related papers by Franklin H. Ernst Jr., M.D.:

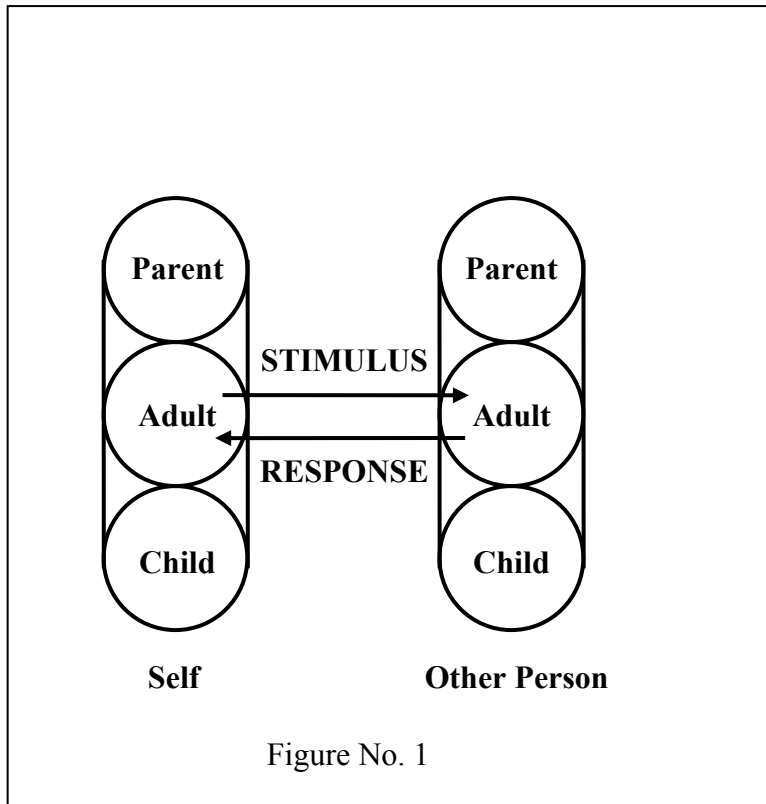
- (a) "Transactional Analysis in the OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening",
- (b) "OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening / Eric Berne Memorial Scientific Award Acceptance Speech, Boston, 1981."
- (c) "Handbook of Listening / Transactional Analysis of the Listening Activity"

² Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., "Formulation: Efficiency in Wanting Is Measurable", The Encounterer, Vol. 1 No. 4, 2-20-1969, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.



The second order of business to becoming a winner is to improve the capacity to sort and classify one's own Adult qualities of self from ones Child self. This improved capacity to sort and classify Adult from Child is requisite for managing self.

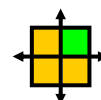
The best method developed to date for organizing personality qualities is represented by the three stacked circles. Paraphrasing Caesar: "Ommia personae est divisa in partes tres." In the terminology of transactional analysis: "He who owns his own (transactional) diagram can better become the master of his own destiny!" This is diagrammatically represented in Figure No. 1.



Whether he is the initial stimulator or the initial responder in the transaction (a "stroking exchange") of an encounter, the "me," in being able to sort and classify, can better determine "what-is-the-best-solution-for-now-for-me."

The most important business for becoming winners is the decisive **commitment to become winners**. This provides the basis for establishing a hierarchy of priorities among the multitude of private and public objectives each person has in mind. Since it is literally not feasible, let alone possible, to be a winner with each and every situation in a day or in a year, it then becomes a matter of selecting which of the objectives and which of the qualities of transactional outcomes (forms of

resolution) will have priority on a given occasion. A person decisively committed to becoming a success and winner with his own family will have his priorities in a different hierarchal arrangement than, e.g., the person with a creative genius for building a new system of transmitting (electric) power or the founder of a new psychotherapy system.



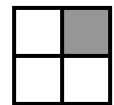
Encounter Resolutions

A person's day to day life is filled with a variety of encounters, one after another, with a variety of persons and circumstances. Some encounters are a simple greeting, a single transaction such as "Hi-Hi!" Other encounters will involve varying numbers of words being exchanged. At the conclusion of each encounter, no matter how many transactions between the parties, the outcome is resolved in one of the four categories of encounter resolutions.

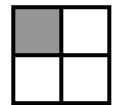
Each social encounter will have a different value for the particular person. An encounter with a spouse or playmate will have a higher personal value than one with a casual office or grocery store acquaintance. Nevertheless, **a person experiences the outcome of each encounter with another person, as one of the FOUR QUALITIES OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:**

"I Am OK **AND** You Are OK" or
"I Am OK **AND** You Are Not OK" or
"I Am Not OK **AND** You Are OK" or
"I AM Not OK **AND** You Are Not OK."

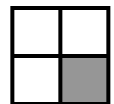
1. **Get-On-With (GOW)**: This comes from the personal stroking experience concluding with "I-Am-Okay-AND-You-Are-Okay." This is a social operation of Get-On-With, get-well-of, becoming a winner with the other party.



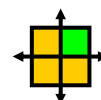
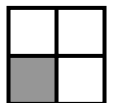
2. **Get-Away-From (GAF)**: This comes from the personal stroking experience concluding with "I-Am-Not-Okay-AND-You-Are-Okay." This is the social operation of Get-Away-From the other party.



3. **Get-Rid-Of (GRO)**: This comes from the personal stroking experience concluding with "I-Am-Okay-AND-You-Are-Not-Okay." This is the social operation of Get-Rid-Of the other party.



4. **Get-Nowhere-With (GNW)**: This comes from the personal stroking experience concluding with "I-Am-Not-Okay-AND-You-Are-Not-Okay." This is the social operation of Get-Nowhere-With the other party.



The four ways of concluding social encounters are also shown in Figure No. 2.

The OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening

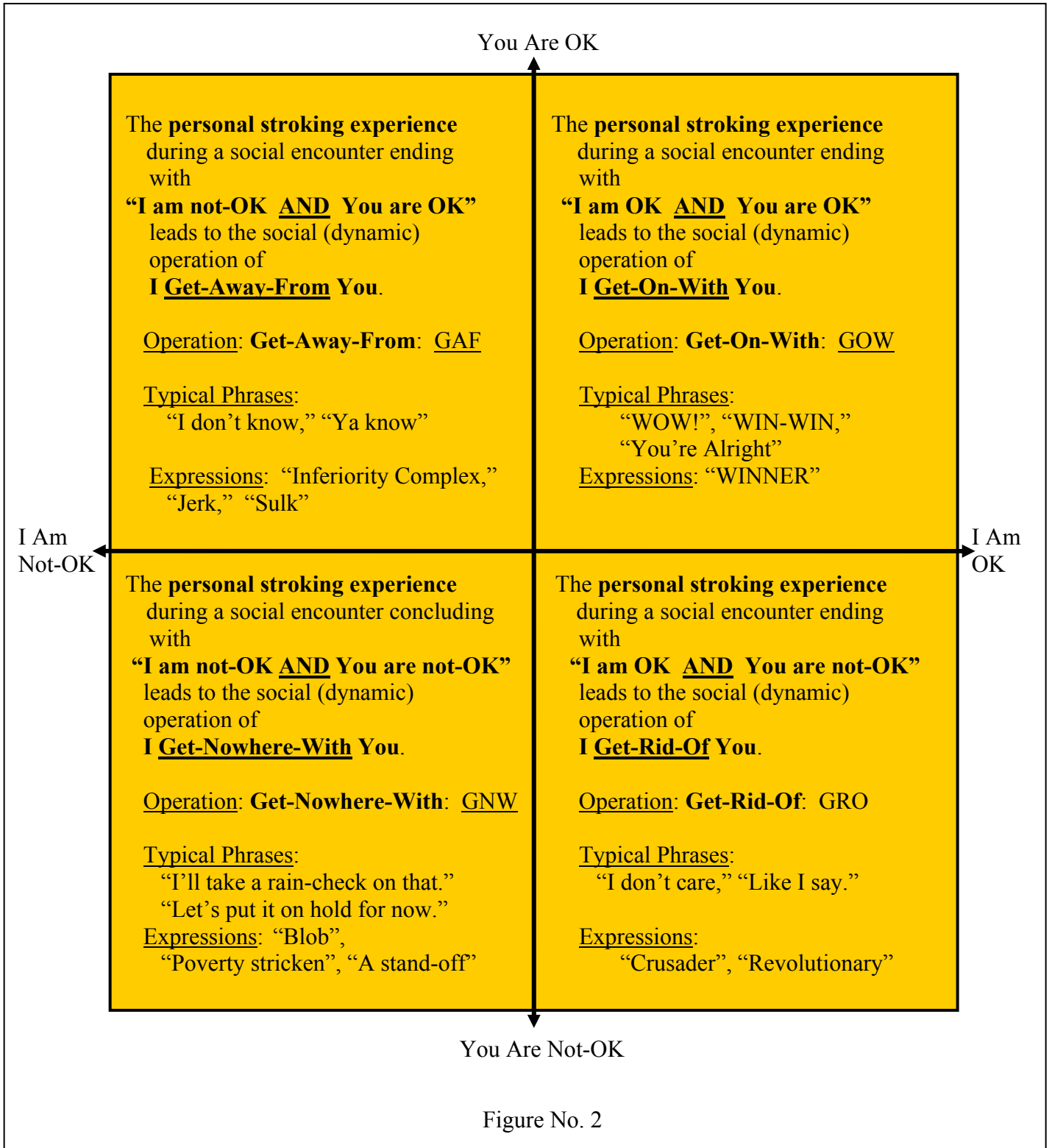
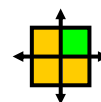


Figure No. 2



Persons familiar with this method of classifying their social operations (GOW, GAF, GRO, GNW) report using each of these at least once a day.³



An example of a **Get-Nowhere-With (GNW)** resolution to an encounter:

Stimulus (Bob): “Hey, Al, will you sign this page for us right away? I have got to hurry up and get it down to the boss.”

Response (Al): “Oh, hey, Bob. Let me think on it a little while first. I won't be able to do it right now, OK?” This is a reasoned (temporary style) Get-Nowhere-With (GNW) resolution.

The responder is saying “I-am-not-OK,-yet-(I am not ready to do it yet) AND-You-are-not-OK (with me yet on this). I am going to wait and study the situation a little more, first. Could be I will see it your way after I look at it.” This is the situation of postponing. Bob got nowhere with Al for now and Al wasn't ready yet to get somewhere with Bob. “I am not-OK to handle it now AND you are not-OK with me, yet, as far as settling this item one way or another.”



An example of a **Get-Away-From (GAF)** resolution of an encounter:

Stimulus (Al): “Hi, Bob! Good to see you.”

Response (Bob): “Yeah, good to see you too! Hey, I want to talk to you a minute now, if you got it.”

(Al): “Sorry, Bob. There's a meeting down the hall I have to get to. Maybe later in the day, though, we can do it. Okay? (leaving).”

In this encounter, Al is resolving it operationally by getting-away-from Bob. (AND it might be said also that Bob is essentially getting-rid-of Al).



An example of a **Get-Rid-Of (GRO)** encounter:

Stimulus (Al): “Well, let's see. I think that covers all the points we had to go over here at this staff conference today. I see the time is up for this meeting. Good to have met with you. We will be getting together again here next week. See you then, Good-bye for now!”

Response (Bob): “See you.”

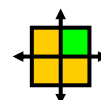


An example of a **Get-On-With (GOW)** encounter:

Stimulus (Al): “Well, the papers here look like they are all in order. I'll sign here and you can sign there, OK?”

Response: (Bob): “OK!”

³ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., “Formulation: Social Operations and Encounter Solutions”, The Encounterer, Vol.1, No. 15, 9-20-1969, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.



Position and “The Professor”

The term "position" refers to the favored Childhood method of resolving encounters with the intimates in the particular person’s life.

"How do I handle my mommy?"

"How do I approach my sweetie, if I can get one?"

"How will I handle (a potential for) getting an award?"

"Will I get sick instead of going to collect it?"

This Child position, “favorite” method of concluding personal social events is one of the four categories of social operation. For example a “Get-Away-From” could be his/her favored Childhood method (position) for resolving high value social encounters, e.g. be embarrassed.

The Adult in the Child takes a “position” as a result of that childhood decision. This is diagrammatically represented by Figure No. 3. The “favored life position” is chosen by the Adult in the Child. **This Adult in the Child is also called The Professor.**

In this example the young child’s decisive event and decision for a favored method of concluding personal social events is Get-Away-From.

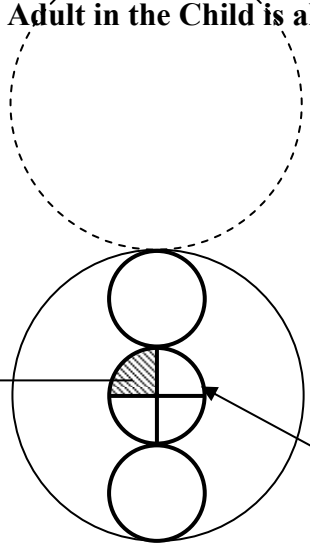


Figure No. 3

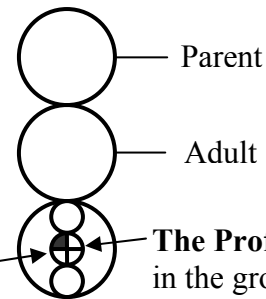


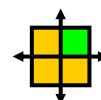
Figure No. 4

As the person becomes older, this Child and his “Professor decision” is diagramed as in Figure No. 4. The social problems, e.g. a psychoneurosis which results from this personally made early-in-childhood decision with its position is the decision and position which often brings individuals into psychotherapy as they get older. This position arises out of a very specific important behavior-modifying decision early in life. Considerable amount of personality resources (libidinal investment) was spent by the Adult of the very young person in his childhood in order to back up his childhood commitment to this decision which then becomes his “Childhood Position”.^{4,5} The decision is about what "I will never, ever, again give away about myself to anybody because when I do, then ... happens!"⁶

⁴ Berne, Eric, M.D.: “Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy”, Grove Press, New York, NY, 1961.

⁵ Harris, Thomas, M.D.: “I’M OK, YOU’RE OK”, Harper-Row, New York, NY, 1969.

⁶ Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: “Leaving Your Mark, Use of the Graffito in Group Treatment”, Addresso’Set Publications, Vallejo, California, 1968.



Position and Script

The Oedipal era of life, say three to four years old, is concerned with adopting the particular Script which will furnish the drama potential for the rest of life and offer the basic methods for organizing one's time of life, a lifetime. A person's life script usually closely resembles some myth, legend, or fairy tale.

Each person, in selecting his script, learns all the character roles in this script. More specifically, he learns at least one of the character roles for each of the four major OK Corral positions in his selected script,^{7, 8} i.e. GOW, GAF, GRO, GNW. (See Figure No. 5)

With the diagrammed quadrant method of organizing events, then it becomes possible not only to organize encounter resolutions, but also, it is possible to sort out the characters and players of each Script (fairy tale, myth, or legend) story into the four categories of social operation, i.e., how does each of the characters in the story resolve his intimacy encounters.⁹ In this instance, the scripts referred to are those fairy tale stories, myths, or legends that have been told from generation to generation, that have been read to children from books; those stories that have not only survived, but flourished in the appeal generated in their telling year after year, generation after generation.

It is possible to place the various characters, the various players of a script story within the **OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening**. Each individual character in a fairy tale, script story, can be placed into one of the four (position) quadrants, as with the example of the story of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears." Goldilocks is the person (usually a girl) who breaks into a home, tries out everything, e.g. the different chairs, the different clothes, the beds, the different foods, different And with each different category she tries out all the articles: air conditioning, settings, the rooms, the sizes and styles of clothing in the hunt to find in each selection of articles, foods, rooms, etc. the hunt is to find what is "**just exactly right**, just exactly fits her, or pleases her the best."

So then after some time in the house, Goldilocks runs out and back to home.

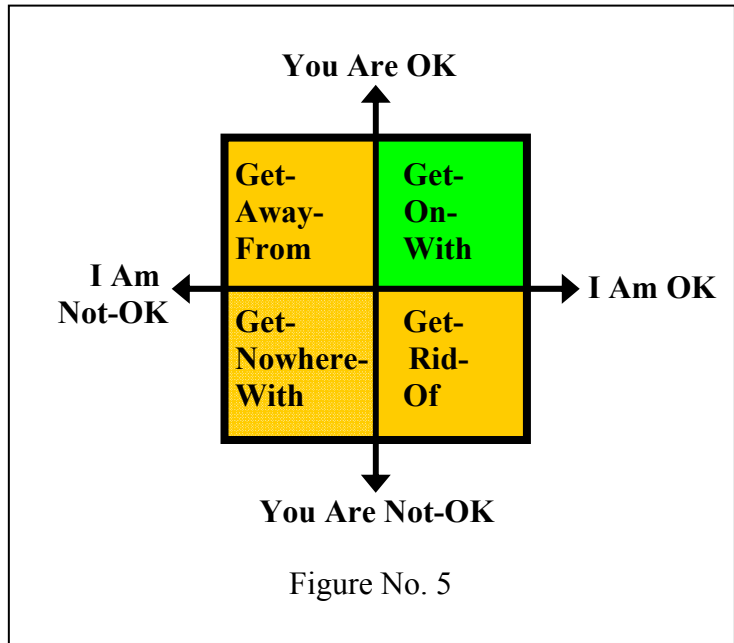
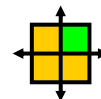


Figure No. 5

⁷ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., "Formulation: The Theory of Getting Well: Part 1, Positions Within Scripts", The Encounterer, February 5, 1969, Volume 1, No. 3, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.

⁸ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., "Formulation: Theory of Getting Well: Part 3, Script and Gender", The Encounterer, June 5, 1969, Volume 1, No. 11, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.

⁹ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., "Formulation: The Get-Well Matrix for the Script Princess-And-The-Pea", The Encounterer, November 20, 1969, Volume 1, No. 19, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.

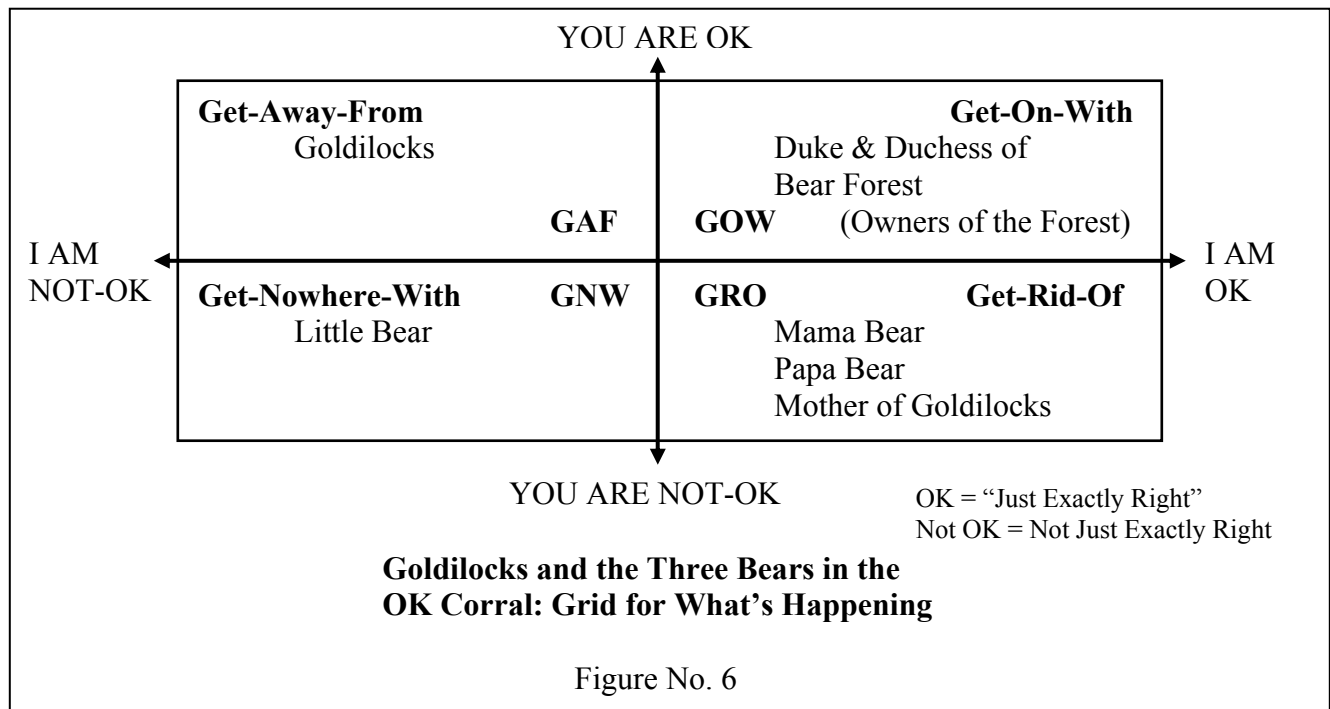


When the three bears return home, the Papa bear, Mama bear, and Baby bear note the disarray and ... of their dwelling. Little bear develops a sense of kinship with Goldilocks in part of the story.

The key attribute through the story is that Goldilocks finds things which are “just exactly right” and what is “not just exactly right.” Thus the attribute for OK in this script, i.e. what makes for OK is “just exactly right” and not-OK is “not just exactly right”; for example too big, too small, too much, not enough, too hot, too cold, etc.

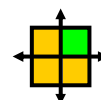
So Goldilocks characteristically is classified as handling events in the Get-Away-From (GAF) manner. Mama and Papa bear (“Who’s been eating my porridge?”) are seen as individuals who get-rid-of other persons in their encounters. Baby Bear characteristically gets-nowhere-with situations. This poor little kid (bear) gets his belongings used up, gets his things broken, gets robbed of his goodies; he just can’t seem to get anywhere in his life events.

Figure No. 6 shows the characters of Goldilocks and the Three Bears “sorted,” into the quadrants of the OK Corral: Grid for What’s Happening.



In shortened versions of fairy tales there are individuals who are not specifically mentioned by name.¹⁰ In the Goldilocks story, the mother of Goldilocks is such a person. The mother of Goldilocks could for example be a woman who, when asked about, is seen as a person who gets rid of people who are important to her. Why? Because for example, she can be pictured as “a big fat lady” who’s reading her True Confessions at home while eating chocolates. Mother has two things in mind. One, she wants to read and eat. And two, what to do with that “brat that I have to take care of” (her daughter Goldie)? Goldilocks is a girl (or a boy) who intermittently returns to the

¹⁰ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., “Formulation: Script: Theory of Getting-Well: In the Script of Little-Red-Riding-Hood”, *The Encounterer*, April 5, 1969, Volume 1, No. 7, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.



house where her mother lives. Her mother greets her on her returns by either saying “Go away kid, get lost, don't be pestering me so much, get out of my hair, you are driving me crazy” or, alternatively, if mother happens to look up between stories and misses Goldilocks, then she says on Goldie's return home “Where the hell have you been, I told you not to wander away from home where I can't see you!” Bam! Bam! Bam! Either way, Goldilocks feels nobody ever wants her around, only wants to GRO her, so she wants to get away from her mother.

Goldilocks as a real person is quite difficult to get a commitment from. Goldilocks is characteristically a person who is difficult to work with. To quote one therapist “They run in and then they run out of your office. They come in for an interview or two and then take off, and you don't see them again for a while. And they really do run very fast.” One Goldilocks was a woman who would enter into the group conversation talking very fast. (She spoke the language referred to as “Speedish.”) “When I was small, I could run faster than anyone else in my neighborhood,” to which someone in the group responded, “Yeah, the fastest girl on the block.”

Assigning characters to the different quadrants in the OK Corral, however, leaves no identified individual assigned to the get-on-with quadrant. (See Figure No. 6) But as with all fairy tales studied in this manner to date, there is someone, at least one characterization for each of the four quadrants (positions). In the instance of Goldilocks, it is “The Forest Owners,” Mr. and Mrs. Forest Owner, who are the GOW persons in the drama.

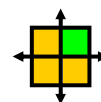
A person can live in and come to make peace with his own script during the trip and adventure of getting well. To condense this: This is done by identifying one's own fairy tale, script and classifying each of the characters in his particular fairy tale into one of the four positions of the OK Corral: Grid for What's Happening. Identify what the unique value for that particular fairy tale is which makes for “okayness,” one character to the other in the story, the social events of each character in their encounters. A person who has identified his script and the Okay value for his script, can then identify which character he is “coming on in the manner of” and then shift, if he decides it is desirable.¹¹ Persons who have gotten well using this strategy have done so by moving a percentage (as much as 3%) of their encounter resolutions into the GOW category of resolution. So then it becomes important in getting-well that the value of what makes for Okayness be located. What is the quality, the item, the unique, innate social value that counts for Okayness and Non-Okayness in the story; and therefore, in the particular person's life. The value for Okay is multifaceted like a quality diamond.

For those persons who have the same script-story (fairy-tale) the value for Okay does not change from person to person. The Okay value varies from fairy tale to fairy tale.

The Okayness value (for persons with) the script-story of “Goldilocks and the Three Bears,” is the multifaceted value of “(not) just exactly right.”

In each instance of dealing with a “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” to date, the “Okay” value of “just exactly right,” has been a workable key whereby a get-well has become achievable.

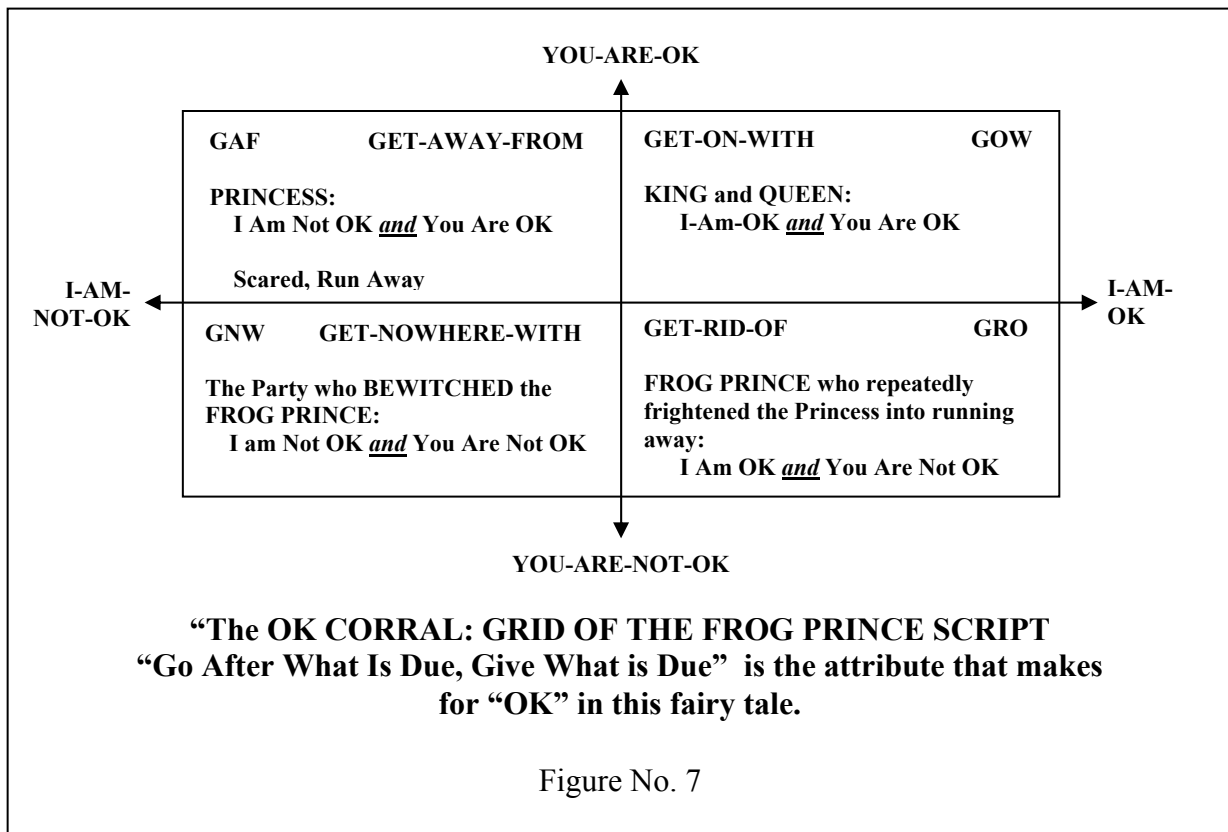
¹¹ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., “Formulation: The Okayness Value for the Pinocchio Script: 'Okay' Equals Self-Directed, Able to Manage Self”, The Encounterer, May 5, 1970, Volume 2, No. 29, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.



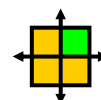
The Frog Prince

One couple recognized that their games (of Games People Play) were regularly ending with reciprocated Get-Away-From (GAF) and Get-Rid-Of (GRO) payoffs. Allegorically, this Frog Prince, Simon, was repetitively going down to the bottom of the pool and retrieving Sue's ball for her. When he gave the ball to her he would also provocatively act gruff, play Pounce ("bwwrrraawwwaaawwk" like a Frog should). This would frighten Sue again into running away from him. One night after fleeing from home, she thought to herself:

"How am I going to get-away-from him? I was furious at him for scaring me again. How was I going to get-away-from Simon so that he would never, ever, ever again find me, to scare me. Then I began to think (say) to myself: 'Hey, wait a minute! What am I doing here? This looks familiar. This is what I have been doing all along. This isn't what I want to do. If I get-away-from him then that's the get-away-from outcome and I don't want to do that. What am I supposed to be wanting to do?' Then I figured to myself: 'What I want to do is get-on-with him. Oh, gee! Shucks! Heck!' So I thought to myself: 'This is my fighter Child. I give up. What I want to do is to get-on-with Simon, not get-away-from him.' So I went home."



Once Sue decided to let her husband be OK he became a “King” in her thinking about him, AND she “grew up”, became a Queen in her own life. The terminology (“get-on-with”, “get-away-from”, “get-rid-of”, “get-nowhere-with”) was a part of her get-well tool kit.



“Problem” or “Talent”

Getting well means to validate the authenticity of one’s own Childself; not be mad at one’s own Childself for his traits. Each game move and payoff of one’s own Child can be valued.¹² This includes the so-called "bad traits." Instead, locate how these traits can be incorporated, integrated into the vivacity, creativity and spontaneity of his Childself: “Hate,” “violence,” “meanness” These each have large chunks of vitality as they are expressed. The treater's job is to vindicate the Child and his “traits,” not disavow, not get-rid-of these qualities. “Hate” can be seen as strength of perseverance; “stubborn” can be seen as strength of purpose, decisive determination; “violence,” a capability for a rapid summoning of all personal resources for an immediate action, for example “throwing yourself into a job.” “Meanness” can be seen as the ability to get “into” the other person, “get under the other person's skin.” As a talent, it is the ability to stimulate another person into goal-directed responsiveness; built out of the same capabilities as seductiveness. Cross-eyedness, as a way of thinking, is the essence of humor where views are overlapped. "Goopy marshmallow giving" can be modified into mechanical generosity in order to get responsiveness. These “problem traits,” however, do need to be refocused.

Get-Well Mechanical Style:

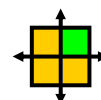
“Getting well mechanical style” is Adult programmed Get-On-With (GOW) in order to activate the Position for Getting Well.

The point of this is that after the decisive commitment is made to get-on-with getting well of a problem and becoming a winner (“get winners”), the treater and “patient” then become increasingly desirous of locating and identifying the person's script story **and** the story's method (value) for conferring “Okayness,” “not-Okayness” on people close to the person with “the problem” in the intimate encounters of life. The treater, however, need not be at a standstill waiting for the script and Okay Value to be found. Shortly after the PAC (Parent-Adult-Child) sorting has been initiated, treater begins to draw patient's attention to the “Okayness about me and you” encounters. Then the treater shows a patient how to use his own Adult to program some GOW operations, to activate the POSITION FOR GETTING WELL more often.

In group this is called “getting well mechanical style” because of the oft announced “but I don't feel it.” The identified patient is told that the Childhood part of himself may not have changed his mind yet about another person. But his Adult self who wants to get well of his problem is able to carry through some business like transactions in a manner with the other person (nevertheless even though still angry at him) in order to selectively increase the frequency of getting-on-with this particular person in his social encounters. The person being treated is already using each one of the four operational solutions shown in his OK Corral at least once each day.

After a person has made the decisive commitment to get-on-with getting well of a problem (such as forgiving somebody he has been holding a grudge against), the therapist and the patient become increasingly desirous of locating and identifying ways of conferring more "Okayness" into some of the person’s (patient's) Adult oriented encounters.

¹² Ernst, F.H. Jr., M.D.: “The Game Diagram”, Second Edition, Addresso’Set Publications, Vallejo, California. 2008



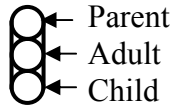
An individual can initiate the use of his own Adult to bring about “in a thoughtful manner” some more Get-On-With operations with selected persons he encounters, in order to activate “the position for getting well” (get-on-with) in himself more often. In group treatment this is called "getting well mechanical style" because of the oft announced “but I don't feel like it,” “It feels artificial when I do it.”

The person can be told that the Childhood part of himself may not have changed his mind, yet, but that his Adult self is able to carry out some transactions in a manner to selectively increase the frequency of getting-on-with some situations and persons. His own Adult can make decisions which differ from his own Child self’s view of the same situation.

By changing a percentage (3%) of the resolutions into GOW instead of vain attempts at changing his script, (the basis for his time of life), the individual can keep the same value for Okaying of self and others. He can keep most of his same intimates and polish up his already developed ways of getting “glowing” GOW intimacy satisfactions; techniques developed before the age of seven, which had fallen into disuse since the early in life “not-give-myself-away” program began. He can keep the same games and the same positions, can keep the same rituals, the same other activities in his life.

In other words:

1. Sort Adult and Child
2. Increase the frequency of Get-On-With in personal life.



Increase by 3%.

Taking Advantage of Encounters/Opportunities with Other People:

Life is one opportunity (encounter) after another. Opportunities come in the form of encounters with other people. These opportunities with other individuals can be taken advantage of in some manner or other, either by personal (Adult) design or at the whim of the "unconscious feeling" of one or both persons. Encounters are opportunities to exploit in some way, in some manner. To take advantage of the opportunities that come along during a day's time means to advantageously exploit the individual encounter opportunity in one of the four methods of “getting along with each other,” i.e., either to GOW, to GAF, to GRO or to GNW. Consciously deliberate, objectively computed “manipulations” to procure a GOW for one's self AND the other person can only add to the zest of the other person's life, e.g., a reciprocated glowing smile.¹³

In a prison therapy group, Terry had been “leading the therapist on.” After some ten transactions,

Bob: “Hey, Doc! Doc!”

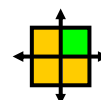
Therapist: “Yeah! What?”

Bob: “Doc, you been HAD!”

Therapist, then: “What? Oh no! Not Terry! Terry, you wouldn't?”

Bob, repeating: “Doc, you been HAD.”

¹³ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., “Formulation: The Facial Warm-Up”, The Encounterer, Vol. 2, No. 30, May 20, 1970 Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.



Therapist reflected a few seconds and then noticed he had, in fact become quite warm. For sure, Bob was right. Therapist thought some more afterward, to then discover that by deciding that it was “okay to be HAD,” that there could be an enjoyment and pleasure in “being HAD.” After all, the first person who ever HAD anyone was his “Mommy.”

In another example Harry described how he dealt with a work “problem.” Harry turned a mythical label placed on him into a Get-On-With advantage for everyone. He had been cornered into working 10 to 14 hour days, 6 days a week. And then the talk among people around him was that he was “stressed out.” Harry figured out that by joining up with the mythology he could de-mythologize, become less stressed, and reduce his work load. He invented a mythical, invisible dog and occasionally played like it tugged on it’s mythical leash, straining, and snarling at the end of a make believe leash. After that, whenever Harry appeared to be getting into a stressful situation he motioned, gave away by his body language to others as if pulling on the leash of his dog, reigning in the dog, sometimes saying: “easy, easy, easy boy.” He told people his dog’s name was “Stressed Out.” When Harry told Teresa this she giggled and smiled. The laughter and smiles were reassuring for everyone. He was OK. What a relief to be able to reign in “Stressed Out” for everyone to see and get-on-with business.

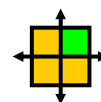
General George Patton named his dog “Coward.”

Techniques for Getting Well

Techniques that increase the frequency of GOW resolutions of encounters with others can be called “prescriptions for getting well,” and can be used for “getting well mechanical style.” This is also referred to as “Get well first and find out why later!” The more mechanical -- the more thoughtful, schematically plotting, programming and planning ahead for “getting well”, the better and faster a “get-well” can be accomplished.

For example, “Give more thank-you’s to more people. And you can start doing it now.” The Adult of the identified person at first is not practiced in the technique of Okaying another person in order to secure a reciprocated OK for himself. The Adult in the person at first “feels stiff.” Often when first trying out “Get Well Mechanical Style” the person says: “It feels phony. I feel like a phony. I feel insincere when I am doing it.” But after some practice, this person committed to “getting well” quite often says: “I feel OK now when I am giving these thank you’s and I see the other person warming up back to me. It works.” The initial mechanical stiffness is similar to playing a musical instrument for the first time.

Josephine, in her first group session, was noted repeatedly ending her words with an “I don’t know” in a subdued voice at the end of sentences. She was given the prescription: “Cut back your ‘I don’t knows’ maybe as much as 1 in 10. **Don’t stop them**, keep them and count them.” This had the effect of stimulating her own Adult into “counting” and thus becoming more in charge of herself while away from the treatment setting. Her Child self was not alienated, was not told to get-rid-of “I don’t know” nor that “I don’t know” was bad. Her Adult was given the chance to take over some management of her transactions with other people, this through the next week by the straight-forward mechanical act of counting (her “I don’t knows”). For those to whom “get-well mechanical style” is strange, there is this to say: Get-Well Mechanical Style is a functional form of the Adult



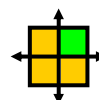
ego state in the person leading the inside “troubled Child” to obtain a GET-WELL (of the symptom), “Get well first.”

Some of the prescribed techniques (“prescriptions”) are:

- (1) “Get-a-level (head),”
- (2) “Gently rub you teeth over each other,”
- (3) “Give with more audibles (vocals) when listening,”
- (4) “Give a named Hello to 15 people a day,”
- (5) “Make-a-(name)-Seating-Diagram at your meetings and in your classrooms,”
- (6) “Give him his name more often.”

Recall that a game player, by carefully timing when he is most likely to be rebuffed, can choose to then give out with an audible expression in spoken words: “I-am-OK-and-You-are-OK also.” By “correctly” timing this expression of good will you can instead guarantee getting yourself rebuffed. This can be done in order to be rebuffed by someone and ultimately to prove the **validity of the particular person’s own non-winner position** and thesis, that it doesn't pay to give-yourself-away: “See! See there! It just doesn't pay to try to be Okay with You! There, that proves it!”

The OK person, committed to “getting well,” will time his GOW efforts better, rather than to prove “it doesn’t help, it doesn’t work.”



Efficiency In Wanting:

“YOU JUST CAN'T BE FRIENDS WITH EVERYBODY!” nor afford to give an OK to everyone. At times a GOW solution to an encounter is not consistent with efficiency in wanting, the essence of winning.¹⁴

Another aspect of the goal of “getting well” is to decrease the “stamp collecting” and “stamp issuing”; in order to reduce the frequency and the intensity of “burning your bridges behind you,” of “standing up for my rights (and on top of the other guy's)” or of “telling him off.”

A Get-well, Get Winners, Becoming a Winner:

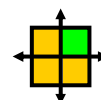
In group Mrs. Fair Thare More was coming to get well of longstanding high blood pressure. “And-nothing-more-was-said” was the usual payoff to her game of “Furthermore.” For a long time she rarely talked to someone in group unless in derision (“a shitty remark”) or to give a “troubled mouth” in her group a soothing-toned “Why don't you?” (“marshmallow”) which on decoding meant “go practice drowning” or “get lost.” Her Adult ego state began on prescription (at first haltingly), to give more “okays,” “thank you's,” “good for you's,” “you're okays” to other persons in her group. One day, seemingly out of context, in a clear, focused voice, with level countenance and a warm face, she told Teenie Athena: “Teenia, that lipstick you're wearing sets your complexion off the best I have ever seen you!” Teenia, surprised out of her usual: “Oh, it's nothing!” get-rid-of cross-up, came level herself and without affectation gave a: “Why, thank you very much Fair!” Both looked warmly at each other for one full second as group quietly watched.¹⁵

Schematically:

1. A GOW encounter resolution will most often get a GOW response back,
2. A GAF resolution will be complementary to a GRO resolution,
3. A GRO will be reciprocated by a GAF, and
4. A GNW will be reciprocated by a GNW.

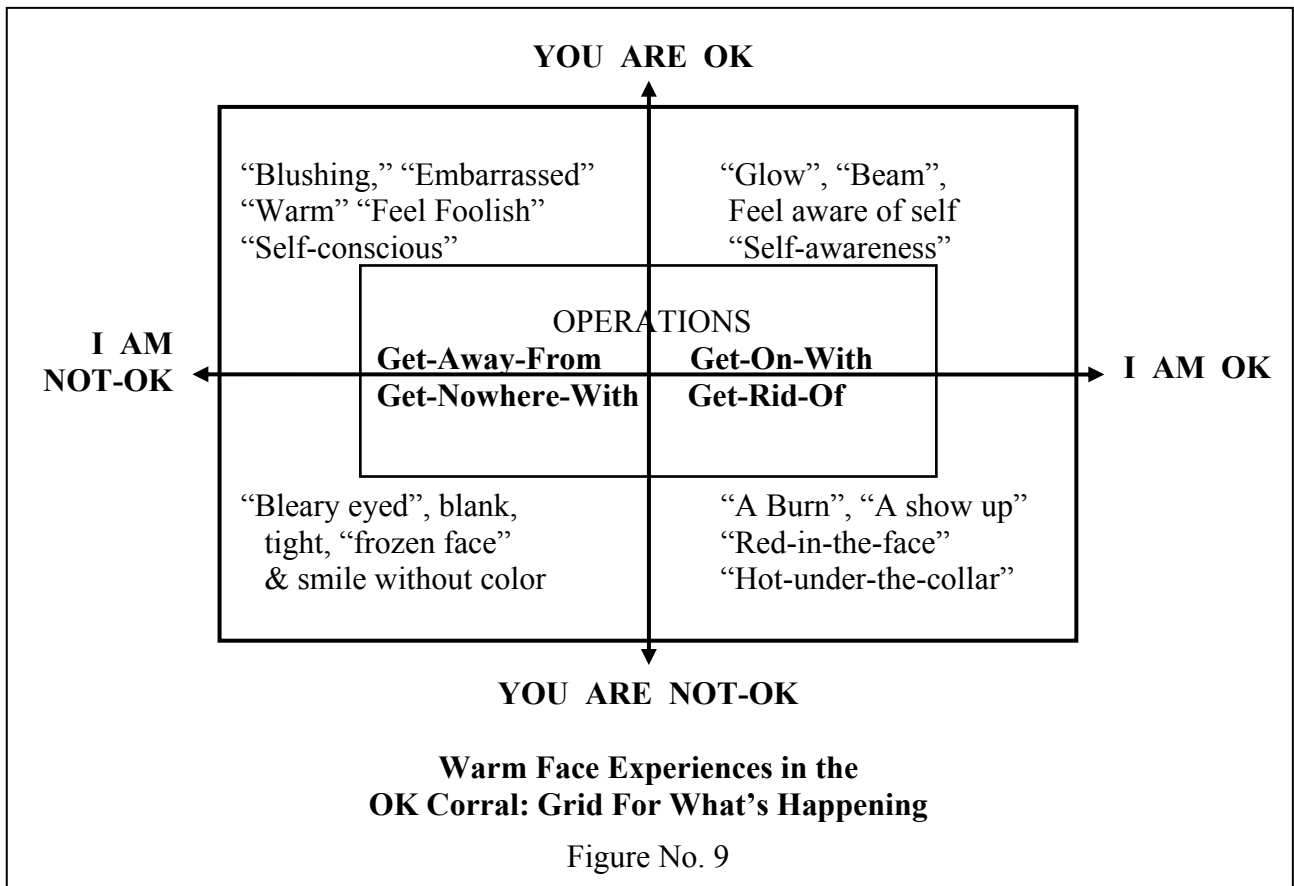
¹⁴ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., “Formulation: Social Operations and Encounter Solutions”, The Encounterer, September 20, 1969, Volume 1, No. 15, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.

¹⁵ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., “Encounter, A Get-Well”, The Encounterer, August 20, 1969, Volume 1, No. 13, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.



“WINNERS” Defined:

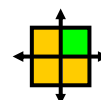
Losers call it blushing, being embarrassed, getting-red-in-the-face, being (made to feel) self-conscious. For Winners, it is “glowing,” it is warm. To be a winner is to be “now and here,” with someone else. It is to be the best. It is to be seen, identifiable, to be awarded. A winner has given himself away for others to know. He has earned an award, demonstrated a skill, an ability of merit. This award is given by another person, the awarder. On arriving in center circle, there to be awarded, the winner meets the awarder. In receiving the award, the winner visibly glows, manifests pleasure, gives himself away to the awarder (plus any onlookers). The winner is glowing for and at the awarder. He shows "now and here" that the awarder is also a winner; the awarder glows responsively for the so-called primary winner. The winner is an authentic person, winning is the essence of authenticity. A winner gets cheers and he gets jeers from onlookers; but more acclaiming than defaming.¹⁶ The Warm Face Experiences in the OK Corral: Grid for What’s Happening are shown in Figure No. 9.^{17, 18}



¹⁶ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., “Formulation: Winners Defined” *The Encounterer*, April 20, 1969, Volume 1, No. 8, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.

¹⁷ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., “Encounter, A Get-Well”, *The Encounterer*, August 20, 1969, Volume 1, No. 13, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.

¹⁸ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., “Formulation: The Facial Warm-Up”, *The Encounterer*, May 20, 1970, Vol. 2, No. 30, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.



Varieties of Intimacy

Intimacy is one of the six ways of structuring time.¹⁹ It is game-free. It is one which is free of pastimes, it is a non-work activity. It is an event which is non-withdrawal from the other person.^{20, 21} It is an encounter activity free of ritual, often carried out within “the 22-inch” intimacy distance between persons. Intimacy, however, need not occur within this twenty-two (22) inch zone of personal space.

Intimacy, of and in itself, is not intrinsically a “good” activity. Berne gave the examples of (a) a man and woman having intercourse, with the avowed intent of impregnation, looking into each others eyes, AND (b) he gave the example of one person looking into the eyes of the second, while in the act of killing the second person.

It is here proposed that acts of an intimate nature, can be classified into the four major operational solutions for life events as follows:

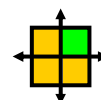
- (1) Get-On-With (the other person): This is intimacy for a maximal quality of I-Am-Okay-AND-You-Are-Okay, given to each other and returned. These are the warm, the “glowing,” the “winner” acts of intimacy. This quality of intimacy can be divided into the reversible quality of intimacy such as when the act is not witnessed, not productive of a dividend (pregnancy) or when not legalized. Examples of irreversible acts are inferred from the preceding, i.e. (a) a “fifteen minute quickie” between a married couple and (b) the “one night stand” between a “casual” couple.
- (2) Get-Away-From intimacy is portrayed by Jerry in Edward Albee's one-act play “The Zoo Story.”²²
- (3) Get-Rid-Of category of intimacy is carried out from the position of I-Am-Okay-AND-You-Are-Not-Okay. It is typified in examples reported by (spouse-killer) patients in a prison psychotherapy treatment group, as they told of their own acts of killing a mate. To quote from one, “I looked at her, into her eyes as she saw me raising my gun and I saw her...” (then describing the act of watching each other, her eyes going dead as she wilted, dying in the describer's arms). Examples of a reversible style of Get-Rid-Of type of intimacy are regularly available to witness in Superior Courts during divorces (reversible because the couples not infrequently do later get back together again).
- (4) The Get-Nowhere-With style of intimacy, has several literary examples. To name a few: (a) the suicide-homicide pact carried out by the runaway wife and the AWOL soldier at the end of the movie “Elvira Madigan,” (b) the end of the opera “Aida” where the queen meets her lover, the sentenced general, inside the sealed tomb of his execution, (c) the sergeant and his Japanese wife with their double suicide in the movie “Sayonara.” Newspapers at intervals will have a story titled, “Couple in Love Pact Deaths.”

¹⁹ Ernst, Franklin H., Jr., M.D., “Formulation: The Varieties of Intimacy Are Classifiable: Intimacy Organized” The Encounterer, April 5, 1970, Volume 2, No. 27, Golden Gate Foundation for Group Treatment, Inc.

²⁰ Berne, Eric, M. D., “Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy”, Grove Press, Inc., New York, 1961.

²¹ Berne, Eric, M. D., “Research: More About Intimacy”, Transactional Analysis Bulletin, April 1964, Volume 3, No. 10, Page 125, San Francisco Social Psychiatry Seminars, Inc.

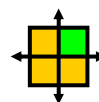
²² This 14-minute play is also one of the best dramatic presentations of a social encounter between two people progressing from Withdrawal, to a (greeting) Ritual, through a Pastime and then a Game and then end in an act of Intimacy. In this drama, Jerry brings events to the point of getting “Peter” to knife him to death as he looks into the eyes of his self-selected, unwilling, horrified executioner.



A reversible quality of get-nowhere-with-each-other act of intimacy would be that of the “hangover” alcoholic. He is acutely, painfully sensitive to all peopled sights and sounds during his hangover. He allows no one to give him sympathy, allows no one to make noise around him, but demands that he not be left alone. The implication being that another drink would help the hangover if he is left to himself.

As some readers will already have determined the above descriptions show that an act of intimacy often follows as the payoff of a game. Probably more frequently than clinicians are aware, get-on-with acts of intimacy (style of payoff) do occur in first and second degree games. And it is reasonable that the psychotherapist does not hear of these inasmuch as this “glowing” intimacy does not furnish the clinician with any problem to treat.

Among other things “A game is the bridge to intimacy between people” (Berne)



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