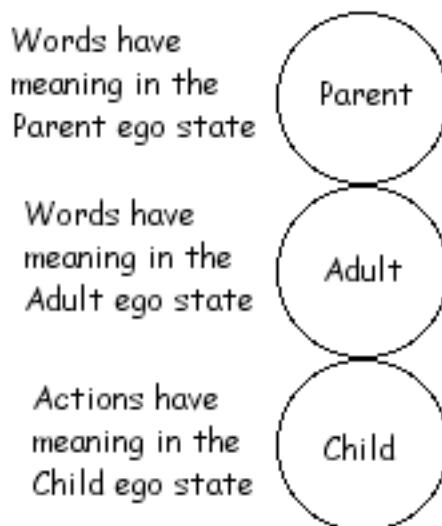


Actions speak louder than words

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We have all heard and probably said this little truism many times and you know what as far as the Child ego state is concerned it is often actually true. Unfortunately being a parent, I like many others, wish sometimes that it wasn't so real for the Child ego state.

Consider this situation. A parent gets up in the morning and tells their 4 year old daughter that they wont hit her. Later in that day the child is hit. The next morning the parent again tells that 4 year old that it wont be hit. What will that 4 year old now think?



Unfortunately for the Child ego state words are cheap. Its easy for parents to say things, all sorts of things and they do. What the Child ego state does is closely watches and remember what the parents do. Particularly how they act over an extended period of time.

Sometimes in counselling people ask me how they can trust someone. My first response to that is to say, start thinking like a 4 year old. Turn off the audio and turn up the video. Watch how this person acts. You particularly watch how they act over time. You particularly watch how they act towards others. If you meet a friend who spends half an hour bitching about a third party, then you know there is a possibility, usually a high possibility that that same person will bitch about you behind your back. Why should you be the exception to the rule?

This is what young children do. They sit back and watch how the parents act over time. Parent will have all the Adult and Parent words and reasons and excuses for their actions. This means "diddly squat" to the Child ego state. Young kids quickly learn that people behave in patterns. People will do the same behaviour over time and in a variety of situations no matter what words are coming out of the parent's mouth.

A chemical solution to a chemical problem

I have mentioned before about the use of methadone for the treatment of heroin addiction. In such a situation the Child ego state of the addict is being given a double message. "Take this drug to stop taking drugs", is what the Child ego state sees. Yes they are told all about how methadone is just a means to an end and that is it legal and so forth. And all that is true, but it is not what the Child ego state sees. "A drug is a drug", thinks the Child. Unfortunately for society that is also true. Just because this society at one point in time has made heroin illegal doesn't make it better or worse than any other drug. This thinking by the Child is also true. (Please note that I am not anti methadone. I have seen it be useful for some heroin users)



Children watch much more than they listen.

I always find it interesting observing young children when they are not being active. When they are just sitting back and observing. You can see it in their eyes, the information is just flooding in.

We hear statistics about how many of the 15 to 25 years olds in Australia smoke cannabis. The research regularly produces figures of between 60% to 80%. Statistically, teenagers are abnormal if they don't try marijuana! Is this really any great surprise?

They see mother and father drink alcohol, most nights in many situations. Australian's consume huge quantities of alcohol. The kids hear the parents tell them about the differences between legal and illegal drugs and how marijuana use is bad for you, and all that is true. But the young child has turned off the audio and turned up the video. The Child ego state sits back and watches and sees the parents alcohol use and it hears the double message. "We have decided that drug "A" is good and drug "B" is bad" is what the Child hears. What is sees is that there is no actual difference between drug "A" & "B". Is it really surprising that most teenagers will try marijuana?

The other double message that has arisen in recent times is with ADD. Kids quickly see how parents and society act in relation to this matter of ADD. What the Child ego state sees is:



Attention Deficit Disorder

If you behave badly you will be called ADD

If you are called ADD then you get given amphetamines

This is the clear, bottom line, black and white thinking of the Child ego state. We as adults can come in and make the situation very grey with lots of words about what is ADD and why some drugs are OK and so on endlessly. But the child does

not think that way, it simply watches the actions of adults and makes very clear, simple conclusions from what it sees.

So if you are wanting to know if you can trust someone. Starting thinking like a young child.

Turn off the audio and turn up the video
Watch how the person acts, over time and in relation to others.



Stop listening and start looking. If each of the people in the crowd were 4 years old what would each be saying and feeling.