

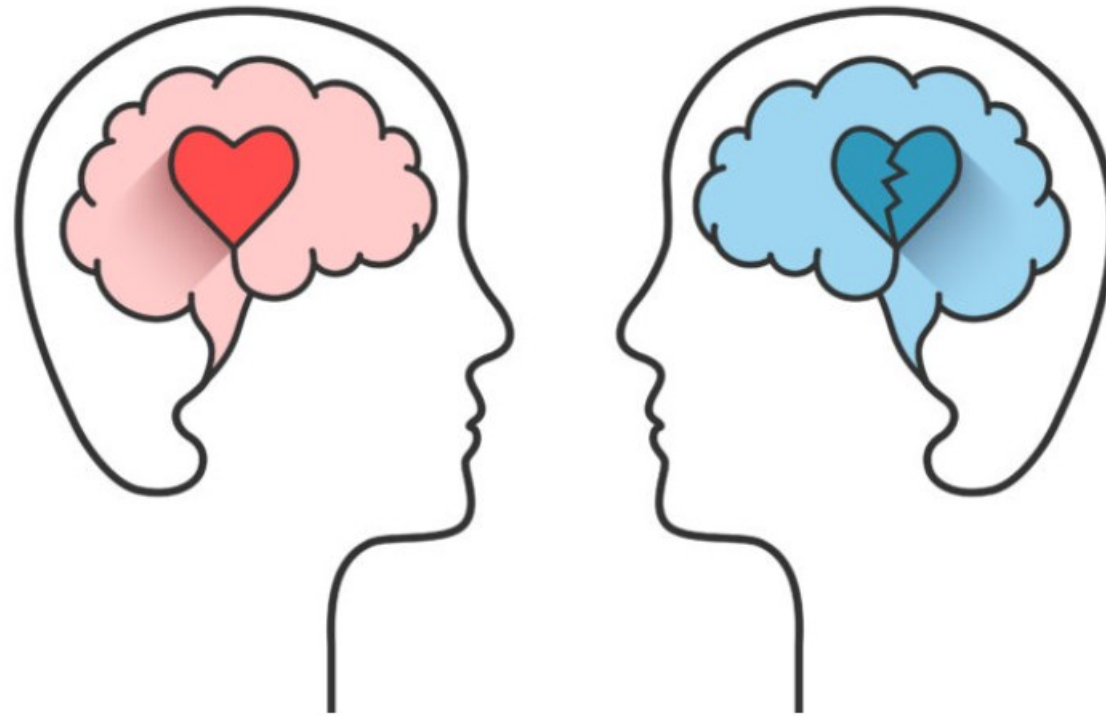
Effective Communication & How to Say No

PV236 – TIME MANAGEMENT & EFFECTIVENESS

JOSEF SPURNÝ



Theoretical framework: Transactional analysis



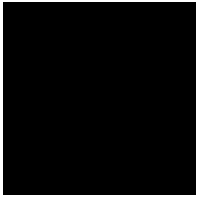
Transactional analysis

3 states of our self (Eric Berne, 1950's)

In the life roles we normally play (child, sibling, student, teacher, employee..), there are **three** specific **internal states** which may apply:

1. Parent
2. Adult
3. Child

TA – Parent state



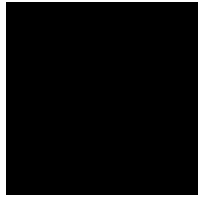
Represents: Parental authority, ethics, morale, tradition

Observed as: setting goals or limits, counseling/coaching/supervision, critique, protective or caring behavior, defending traditional or “normal” values, setting rules and ensuring that they are followed

Variants:

- **Criticizing parent** – command & control, blaming, unwanted advices, “...you should”, “...you must”
- **Caring parent** – support, protection, appreciation, “Well done!”, “I’m so proud of you”

TA – Adult state



Represents: objective, balanced communication, responsibility, bound to reality

Observed as: awareness of pros and cons, realistic expectations, goal seeking, predicting future, working coalition, making and fulfilling agreements

TA – Child state



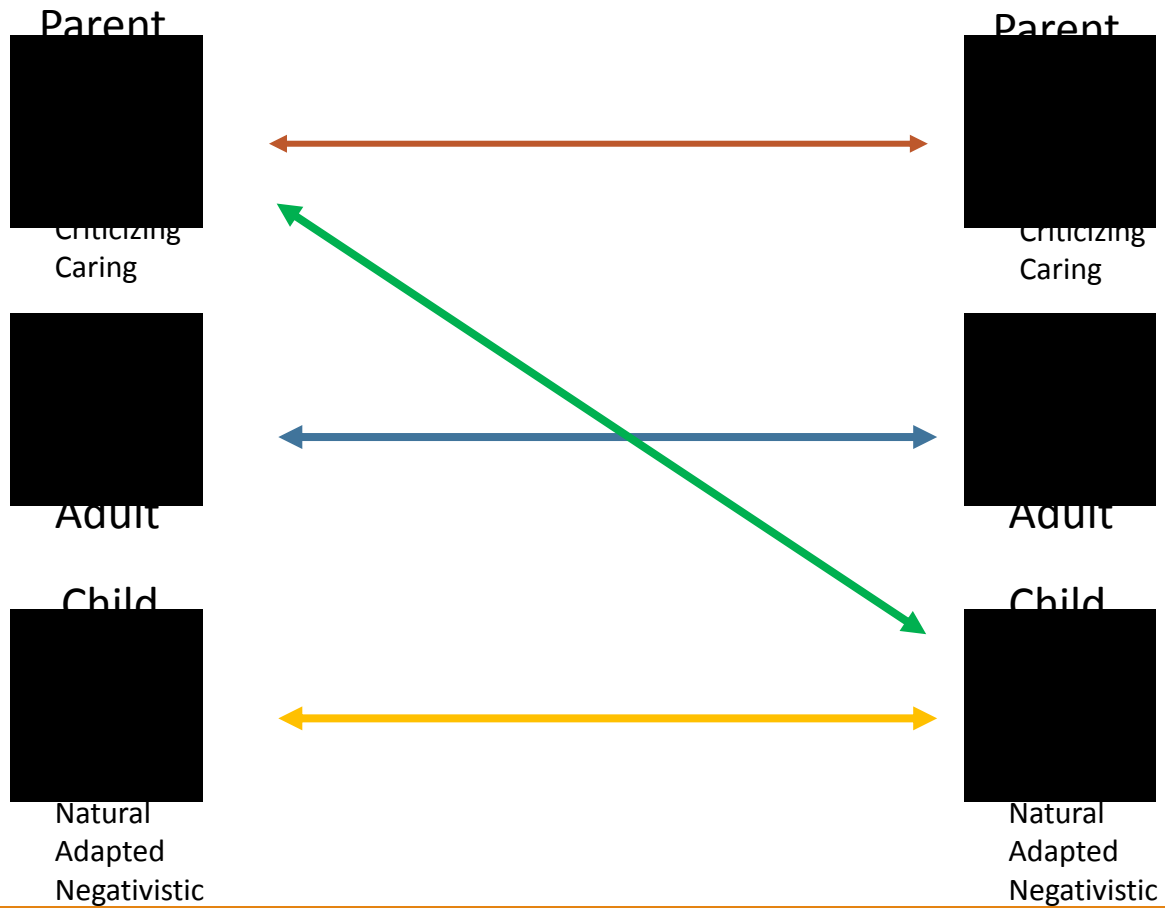
Represents: Dependency, tendency to be lead, internal wishes, feelings, fantasies

Observed as: emotional episodes (anger, joy, envy...), making fun, playing games, wishful thinking, unrealistic expectations, seeking benefits and overlooking (avoiding) costs, lightheartedness / irresponsibility, manipulation

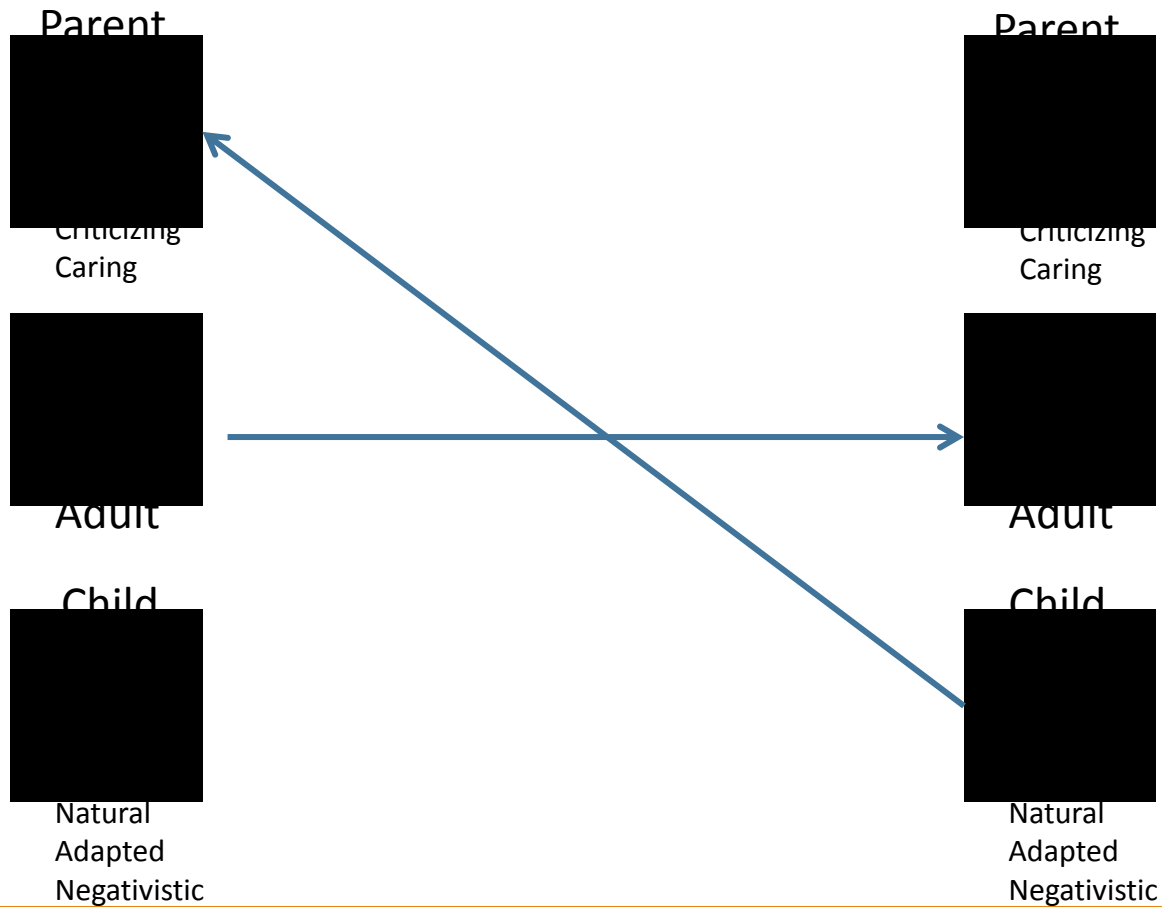
Variants:

- **Natural child** – behaves spontaneously
- **Adapted child** – as a result of conditional love, it seeks to fulfil parental expectations, own motives may cause guilty consciousness
- **Negativistic child** – rebellious, questioning authority, not willing to cooperate

TA - complementarity



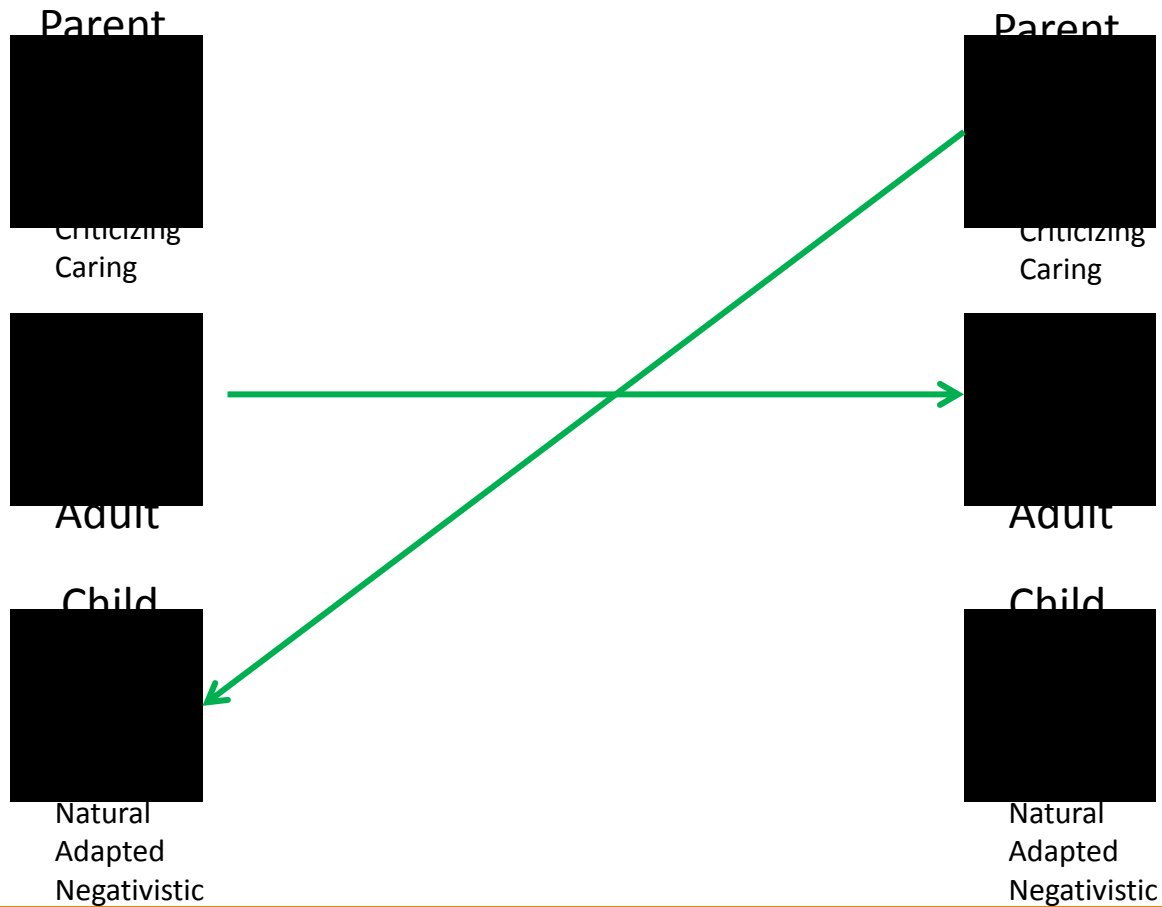
TA - conflicts



You and your roommate are studying the same studying program. There is a deadline approaching, you suggest that before starting to study, you will both watch an episode of a favorite TV series.

Imagine the conversation to match the portrayed relationships.

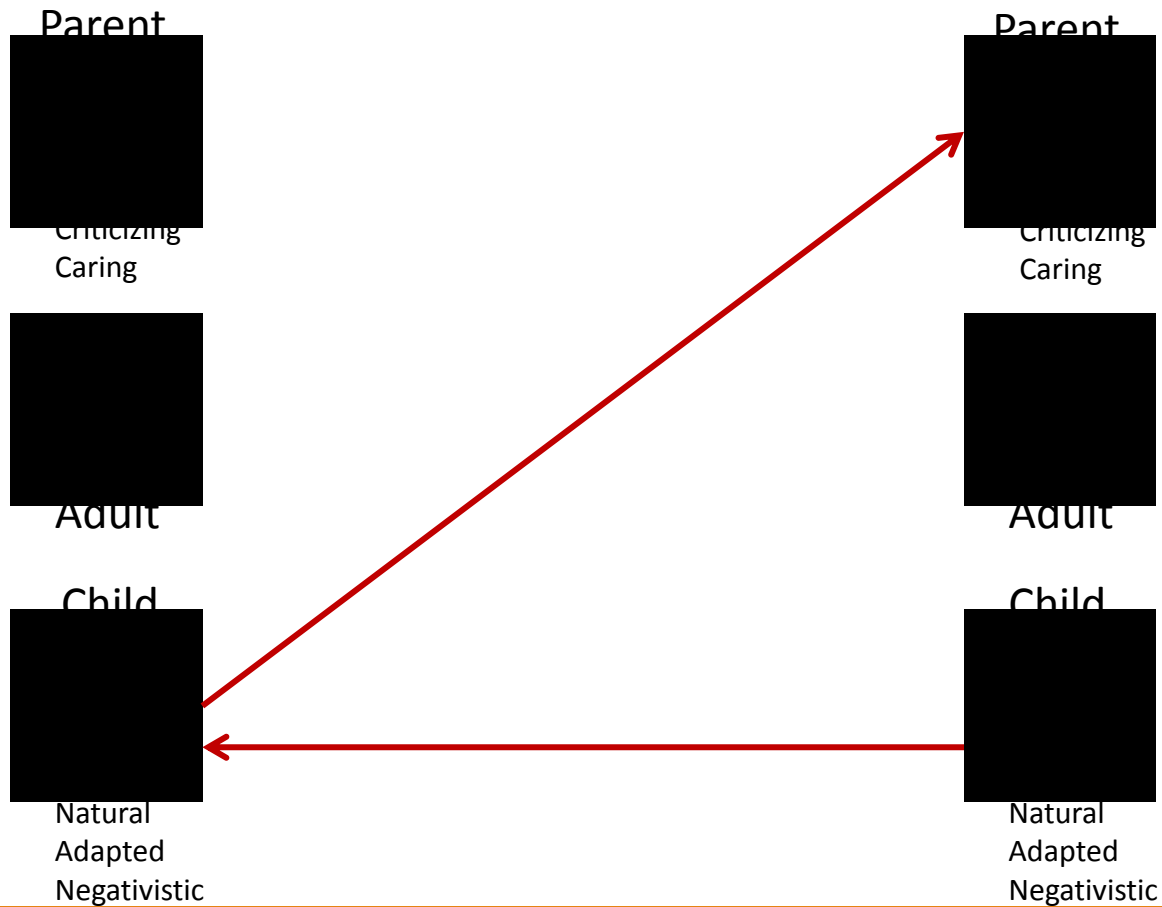
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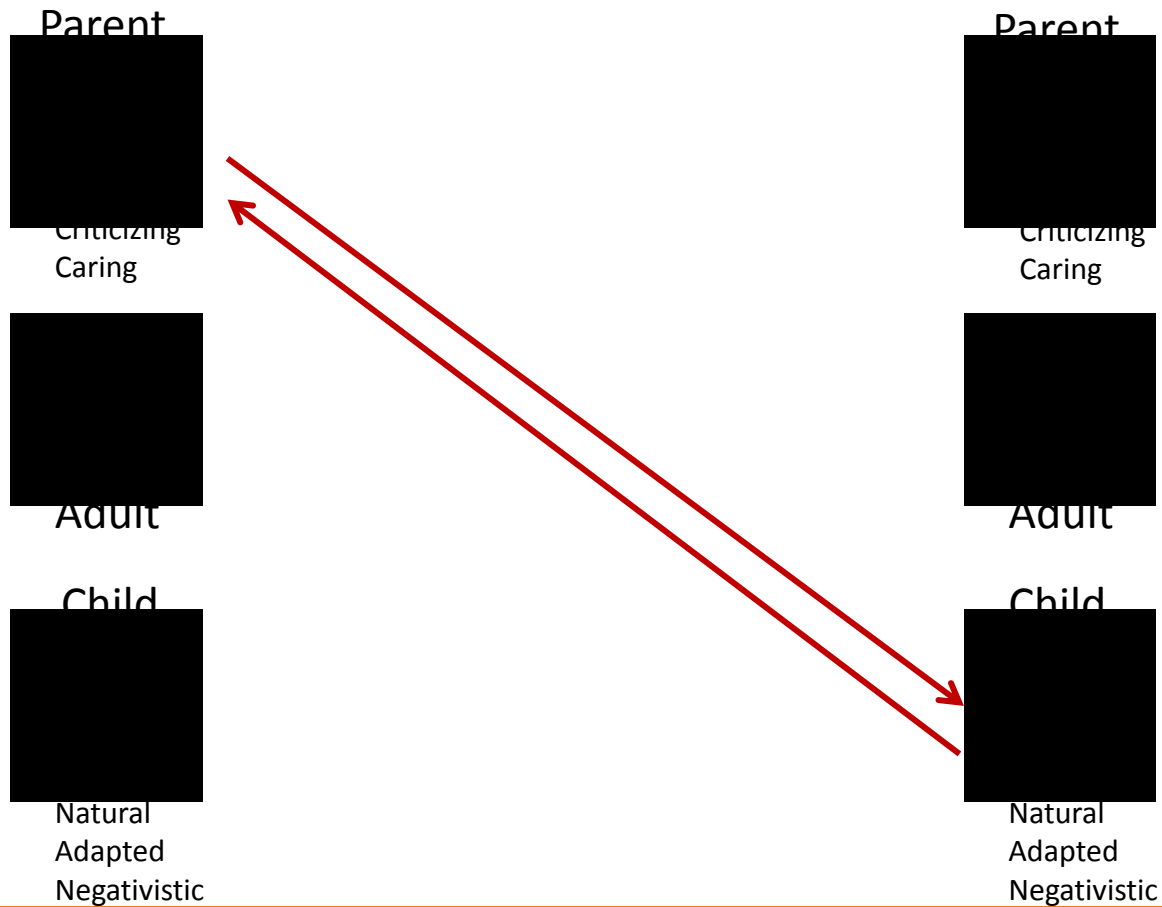
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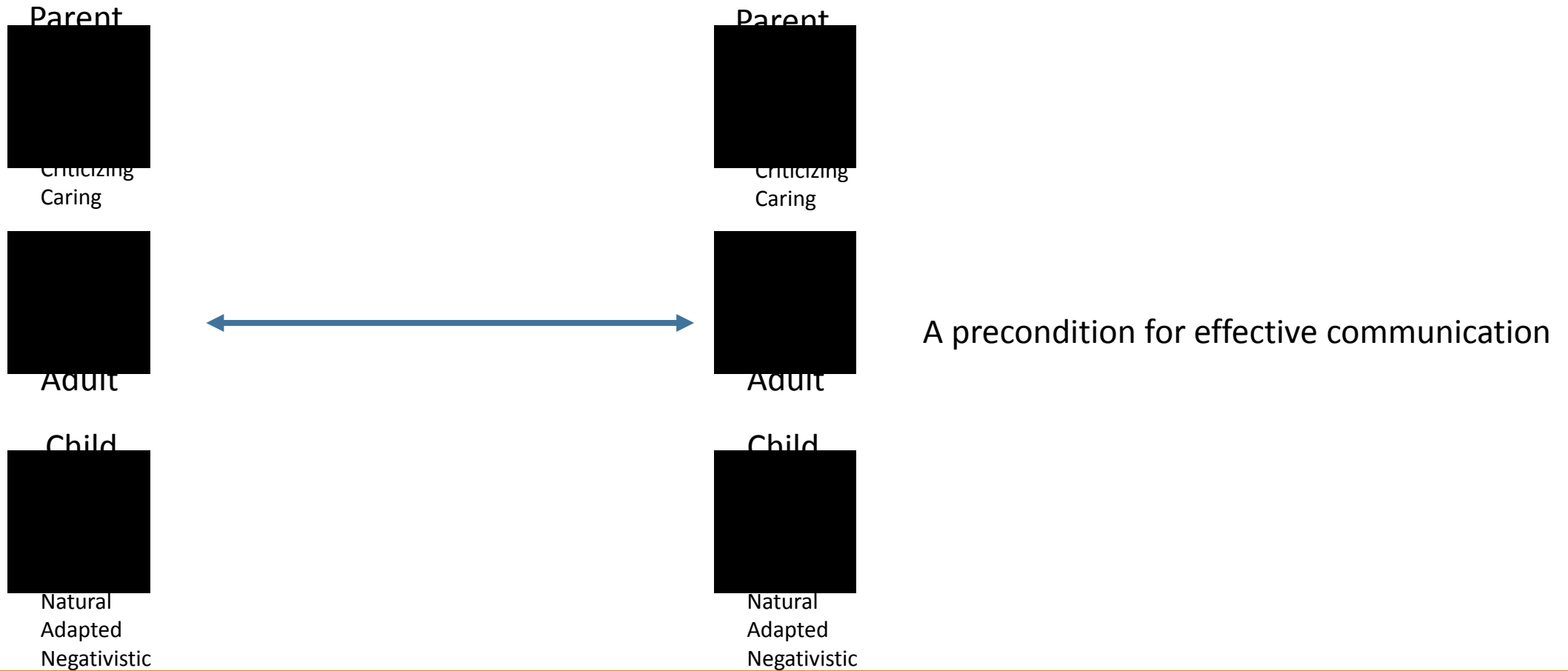
Imagine the conversation to match the portrayed relationships.

TA – Idealization vs. devaluation



1. *Projected, unrealistic, idealized expectations*
2. *Confrontation with reality – expectations not met*
3. *Devaluation – disappointment, rejection (baby thrown away with the bathwater)*

TA – Good working coalition



Effective Communication



...is not only about passing-on the information content

Two-Way Communication

Communication is not only about passing-on the information content...

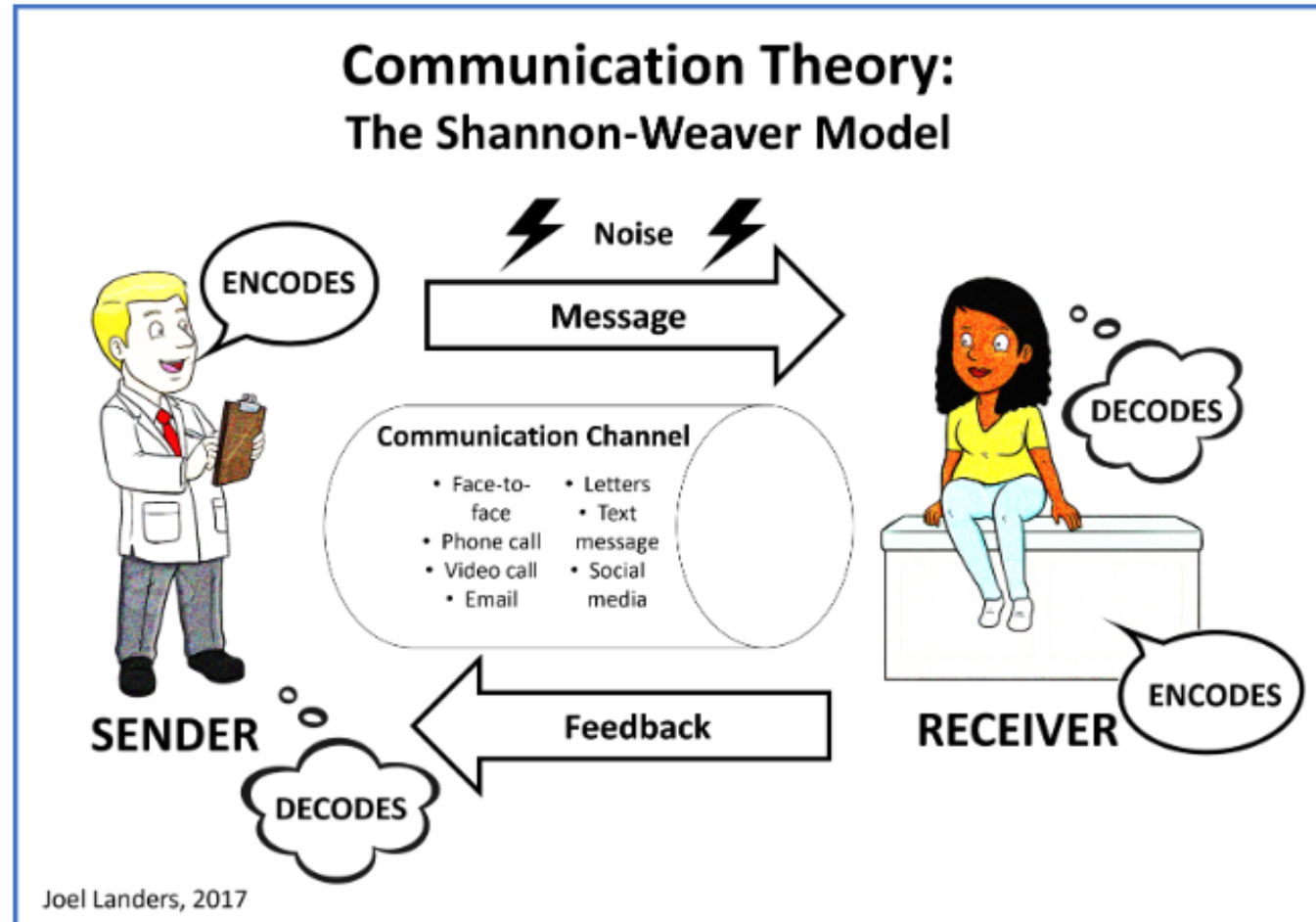
... meaning and mutual understanding must be ensured

Do I get you right that...?

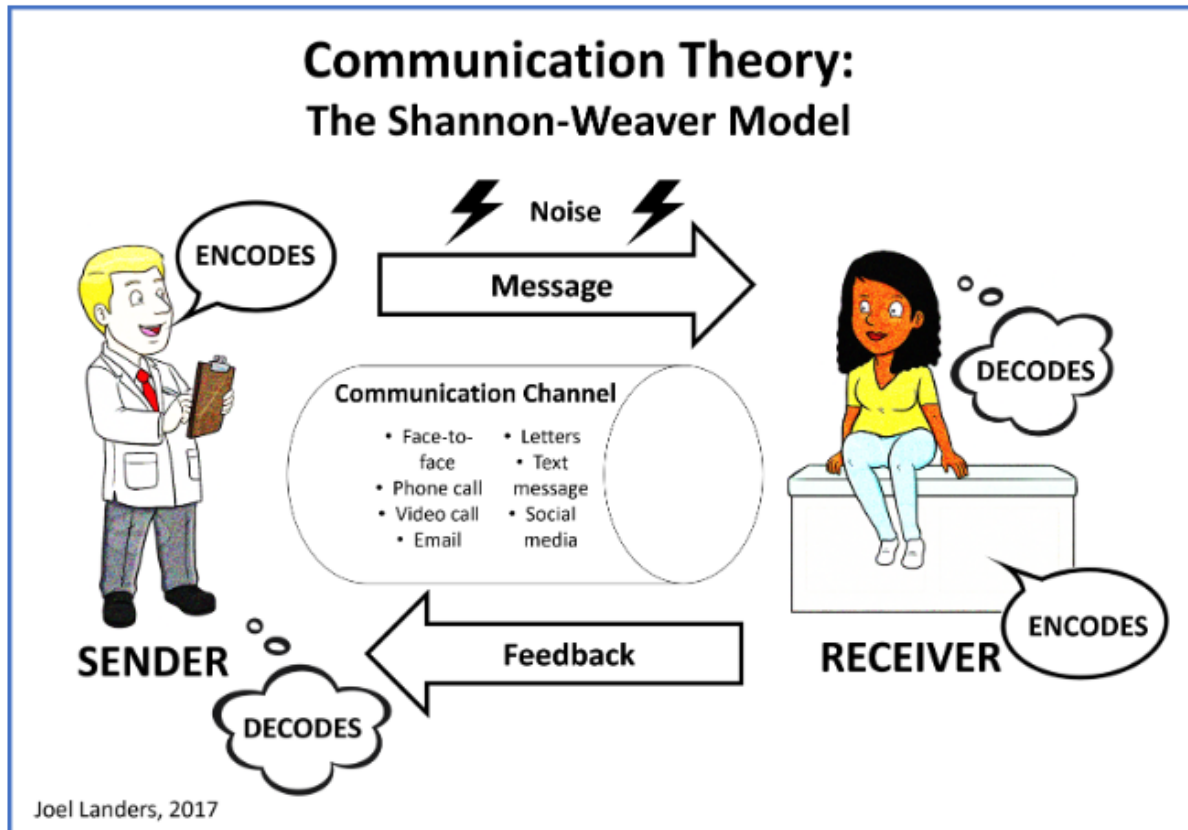
Let me recap what you have said such that I know that I understand you correctly...

- You should not pretend you understand something when you do not
- It is not a shame to ask!
- Be a good listener – show genuine interest, ask questions – vs. waiting for your turn to say something about yourself

Shannon-Weaver Communication Model



Shannon-Weaver Communication Model



How can we improve encoding/decoding?

What might negatively impact encoding/decoding?

What might cause noise?

Avoid offensive-defensive reactions

Communication is not only about passing-on the information content...

... meaning and mutual understanding must be ensured

... but **understanding** does not always implicate that the other party will be **willing** to act accordingly

- Negative emotions might cause that people will not do what you expect despite they understand you very well
- TA: try to stay in Adult mode – vs. slip into Parent-Child mode – de-escalate.

You are raising your voice, which makes me irritated. Let's slow down, take a short break, maybe grab a coffee, and we can continue once we are both calm down.

Avoid offensive-defensive reactions

- Acknowledge others' right to feel upset (angry, sad, irritated...)

I see you are angry, and I understand it, I would also be angry if I were you...

... in case you do not understand it, it's better to ask rather than pretend you do.

- and vice versa: if you are upset, explain your reasons.
- if the other party refuses to understand, simple technique might help:
 - please, rephrase what I've just said
- Sometimes emotions just need to be expressed (*let the steam out*), suppression might lead to escalation in the future
- Negative emotions are often reactions to
 - Previous experience
 - Expectations that are not expressed explicitly



Watzlawick model of pragmatic communication

Human Communication has two layers:

- Digital = Content (verbal)
 - Analogous = Relationship (nonverbal, relational, emotional...)
-
- Humans are the only creatures who can communicate both analogous and digitally
 - Analogous layer gives meaning to digital information (same sentence can have vastly different meaning)
 - It is challenging to talk about analogous information using digital means – it requires encoders/decoders, and this process is always leading to loss of information
 - Understanding communication can be done through observation of redundancy – i.e. repeated patterns of communication
 - Pathologic communication is typically related to loss of ability to communicate digitally
 - Double bind – digital and analogous layers are in contradiction

Watzlawick model of pragmatic communication

Content	Relationship
Report	Command
What is said	How it is said
Computer data	Computer program
Words	Punctuation
Verbal channel	Nonverbal channel
Communication	Metacommunication

Solution-Seeking

- effective communication exchange shall have a clear point
 - meetings shall have a summary / to-do lists / future steps / definition of responsibilities
 - discussions shall lead to a conclusion
 - emails shall be understandable (bold text, bullet points, references...) and provide necessary context



Expectations Management

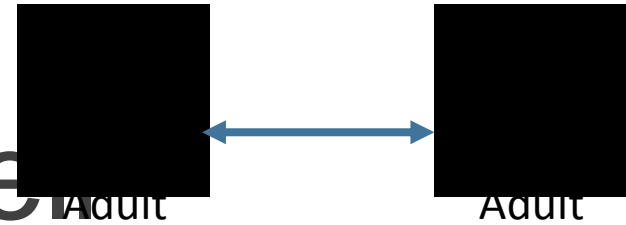
What might be a cause of failed expectations...?



Expectations Management

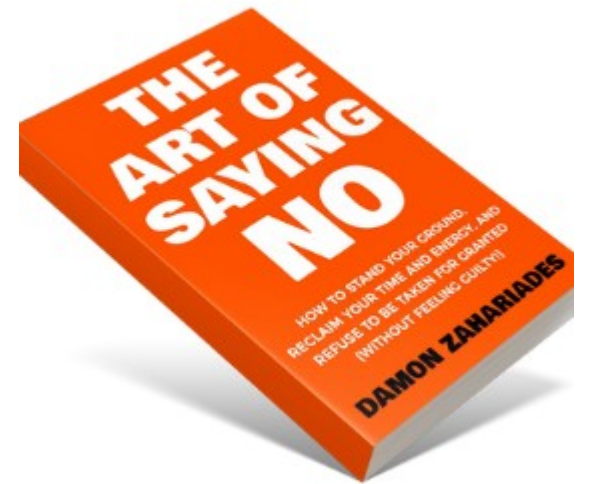
- unrealistic starting point
- cultural stereotypes
- social stereotypes
- people do not always act rationally or logically correct
 - cognitive heuristics / biases
 - Framing,
 - anchoring,
 - Kruger-Dunning effect
 - [etc...](#)
- idealization
- ...

Expectations managed well



- formulate the problem in front an as simple as possible
- make sure expectations are realistic
- do not overcommit your capacity for the delivery
- do not hide information, even when it's not good news – darkness stimulates imagination
- try to avoid different interpretations of the same information
- it is better to under-promise and over-deliver than vice versa

How to say NO



Why are we afraid to say no...?

Why are we afraid to say no...?

- As kids, we wanted to do stuff, but our parents said NO
 - to protect us
 - to teach us social norms
 - because they didn't have time or money for us
 - ...
- In our mind, we internalized our parents into consciousness (super-ego)
- Trying to be a good boi / girl, we might tend to meet expectations from authorities

Why shall we be able to say no...?

Why shall we be able to say no...?

- to protect us from overload
- to have time for hobbies
 - Leisure time is no wasted time!
 - Remember maintaining the narcissistic equilibrium
- to protect our health – long term perspective
- to have time for friends
 - Social support theory – weak links help adapt to crisis

- sometimes “no” to short-term reward may lead to greater reward in the long-term
- FOMO – fear of missing out
 - Anxiety about missed opportunities, comparing myself with peers (social media)

Golden Time Management Rule

Someone wants you to do something:

You should say NO if you can.

You should say YES if you must.

What if we say no...?

- some people might be used to the fact that we have never objected against their demands
- they might not even know that it causes discomfort, as we never objected
- the more we comply, the higher the chances that we will be asked to do something again

- what will actually happen if we say no?
 - Maybe nothing at all
 - Maybe it is all in our head
- In healthy relationship, people should have right to say no

- If you have trouble saying no, train it in situations that have zero impact on your life (e.g. marketing calls...)

Homework assignment – Art of Saying No

- 1) What are the typical situations when you cannot, or you are unable to, say no?
- 2) In general, what are the reasons or concerns/fears that prevents you to say no?
- 3) Imagine a situation from your life where you would like to be able to say no in the future. How can you say it such that your colleagues/ friends / parents / managers ... will accept that? Think about arguments supporting your stance.
- 4) Try to say no. Pick a situation (choose appropriate difficulty level) and say no. What happened? What was the reaction? Was it better or worse than your expectation? How did that feel?

Debrief. Level up. Repeat.