



Modelling the ICHK Student



Whether consciously or not, all schools and colleges employ a working model of the psychology of their students.

What makes these young people tick? What animates, excites and stimulates them? What do they find challenging or intimidating?

And how do they respond to challenge and threat? What relations do they enjoy with one another and with adults? Which thinking

strategies come most naturally to them – and which represent a stretch?

How do they *learn*? In answering these – and a thousand other questions – schools arrive at their model.

Why 'model'? Well, because, however hard we try, the full complexity of individuals will always elude us: a model is as close to the truth as we can attain.

Many, if not most, schools tend to work with a relatively undeveloped model of their students' psychology. No very great thought has gone into the model and it has little deliberate impact on the organisation of the school or the ways in which lessons are planned and taught. But, at ICHK, we believe, as teachers, that we should be ready to work harder, more explicitly and more creatively to understand the life conditions of our students.

We believe this because successful teaching and learning, especially with young people, are founded on trusting relationships; and trusting relationships are based on mutual understanding and shared respect.

We know that building relationships of trust with our students depends on a twofold commitment:

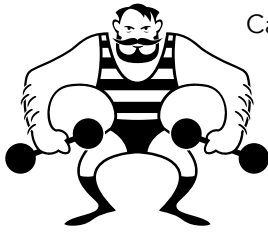
- Firstly, a commitment to a serious appreciation of their characters and histories as unique individuals;
- Secondly, a commitment to understanding the forces and factors that affect them by virtue of their age.

These commitments have led us to develop the 5 + 1 Model of our students that we share with staff and parents – and with the students themselves. The model is sophisticated enough to do justice both to our students' expanding personalities, and to take account of their shared characteristics as pre-teen and teenage learners.

In complicating our model of the ICHK student, we do not imagine that we have arrived at the only, or even necessarily the best, means of understanding young people – and so we are always open to suggestions and dialogue. But we do believe that our model – which is built on the collective insights of five influential thinkers in education and developmental psychology – has many strengths; and that it is a definite step forward from the unthinking assumptions which characterize much mainstream schooling.

On initially joining the school, all new staff are invited to join a Learning Group which introduces them to our 5+1 Model, the contours of which we trust will inform their teaching, leading and *being* at ICHK – and which are outlined in this leaflet.

1st Strand: Fixed vs. Growth Mindset (Carol S. Dweck)



Carol Dweck is Professor of Education at Stanford University and author of Self-Theories, an influential book on student self image and its consequences for their performance in school and beyond. Self-Theories, which is based on 35 years of research in the field of education, is aimed at an audience of teachers and educators, and is not an easy read. However, Dweck went on to achieve considerable popular success with her follow-up, Mindset, which covers much of the same ground in a more readable fashion.

Dweck's work is centrally concerned with the question of how people's beliefs about their intelligence affect their motivation and achievement in academic and other contexts. Her research indicates that people tend to develop one of two different concepts of 'ability' or 'intelligence' – either what she terms an 'entity' or an 'incremental' view. She will later substitute the terms fixed and growth mindsets for these views.

An entity or fixed mindset conceives of intelligence as a fixed or stable trait. You either have it or you don't: it is distributed unevenly among different individuals – and you've either won the genetic lottery or you've missed out. The implications for this mindset are that students develop the aim of looking smart and performing well, even if this means sacrificing learning: in other words, students with a fixed mindset would prefer to score well on a test which is actually too easy for them, than score averagely on a test that stretches their understanding or knowledge. Or, in a sporting context, they would prefer to beat a much weaker opponent than lose narrowly to a stronger one. In the language of Vygotsky, students with a fixed mindset would prefer, wherever possible, to remain within their comfort zone and to avoid being pushed into their ZPD (zone of proximal development), where they might make mistakes or need support. For learners with a fixed mindset, making mistakes is an indication of a lack of intelligence, and this is a lack that cannot be altered for the better.

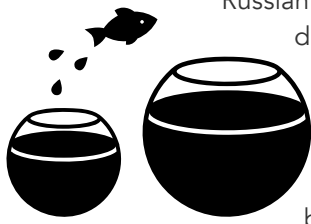
For these students, taking time or making an effort over tasks is of dubious merit, as it seems to indicate a lack of intelligence. Truly 'bright' people, they reason, can do things easily; only 'dull' people need to work hard. Faced with success in their efforts, they can tell themselves "I hardly study yet still do well, I must be really smart"; and, faced with difficulty or failure, they can say, "I didn't do well, but then I didn't try, so that proves nothing". Their strategy following failure or difficulty tends to be to make still less effort, to act bored, to procrastinate or to externalize responsibility ("It's not my fault, it's the teacher – he's useless"). So, when academic or other work becomes difficult, effort is withdrawn so as to preserve a sense of ability – and, in this way, any chance of real achievement is sacrificed in order to hold onto the belief that they *could* do well, if they tried.

The alternative is what Dweck terms the incremental, growth or malleable mindset – and its consequences are directly opposite in their effect. These learners believe that their intelligence or ability consists of an ever-expanding repertoire of skills and knowledge that can be increased through effort and figuring out successful strategies to tackle challenging tasks. For these students, the goal is not to *look* smart but to *be* smart and to *become* smarter. They believe that ability or intelligence is not global or general in nature, that we all have "spiky profiles" (are good at some things and not so good at others), and that ability can always be developed for the better through study and practice.

These students react well to mistakes and mishaps. They appreciate that failure is simply a temporary state of affairs, and that it can be tackled by more practice, more engagement and more study. Robert the Bruce can be thought of as the archetypal incremental learner: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again"! For the growth mindset, making mistakes is part of learning, an inevitable accompaniment to pushing yourself beyond your comfort zone, and part of the excitement of developing new skills in new situations.

In ICHK, we are concerned to encourage a growth mindset in our students. We try to model language that encourages them to conceive of themselves as a work that is constantly in progress: however well or badly they are achieving, they can do better with practice and effort. As a simple example, we avoid feedback that suggests students embody a fixed quotient of intelligence ("Wow! Well done, you're smart!"), and give instead feedback that emphasizes commitment and engagement ("Nicely done! All your hard work has really paid off.") And we draw attention to the strategies, techniques and habits of mind that, because they give due place to hard work and diligence, reliably result in better outcomes – right across the curriculum, and, indeed, outside of school and in their lives more generally.

2nd Strand – Comfort Zone and Zone of Proximal Development (Lev Vygotsky)



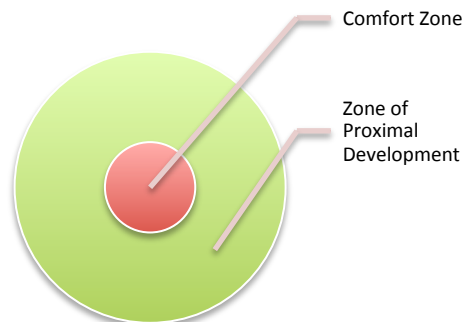
Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky is celebrated for the ideas he developed in the early part of the 20th century, which insisted that learning should be understood as an essentially social activity.

For Vygotsky, the role of the teacher (or the “more knowing other” [MKO]) is not to simplify and parcel out new knowledge, but to create a safe environment in which the learner can access new material – and where, properly supported and guided, she can move from her current point of understanding or performance to a higher level. The teacher’s role in ‘scaffolding’ this move is to act as a “loaned consciousness”, as someone whose greater competence can be temporarily leaned upon to facilitate growth.

Vygotsky was interested in problem solving, and how the mind acquires and masters new skills, concepts and knowledge. He suggested that the learner has two areas of development: the ‘comfort zone’ encompasses all that the learner can do independently – those skills, ideas and knowledge that are reliably within our grasp and compass. Beyond this primary area lies what he termed the ‘zone of proximal development’, or ZPD – here we find those skills, knowledge and abilities that are within our reach but not yet fully grasped.

The ZPD, in other words, is that *sphere of thinking or action immediately beyond what a person is able to do reliably well, without aid or support.*

When in the ZPD, someone is outside of her comfort zone – and her performance is inevitably going to reflect this fact. She will make mistakes, get things wrong, require support, become stuck and find activity both challenging and tiring. But, Vygotsky insists, all these symptoms are to be welcomed – they are sure signs that the person is learning!¹



At ICHK, our goal is to provide students with the confidence to work outside of their comfort zones and in their ZPDs as often as they feel able. As noted above, being in your ZPD requires *courage, trust, collaboration* and *energy* on the part of the learner – *courage* to try activities that lie outside of current competence; *trust* in a safe environment in which to give this effort a go; *collaboration* with the MKO who is able to provide support; and *energy* to persist in the face of genuine challenges to existing aptitudes and limits.

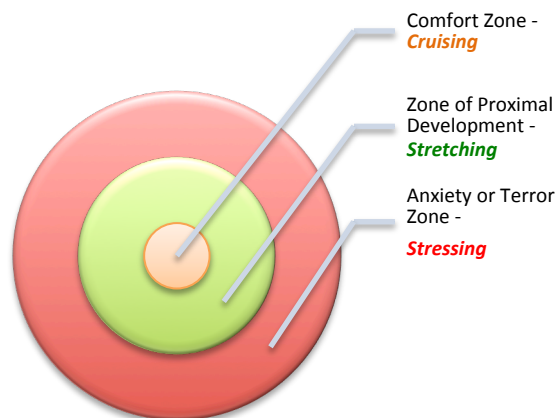
¹ One of the ironies of adopting a Vygotskian perspective is the realization that ‘acing the test’ is actually an empty victory – in that one’s time would have been better spent in undertaking a challenge in which one did less well, but was stretched more.

For this reason, staff at ICHK are constantly seeking ways to promote a culture in which informed and thoughtful risk-taking – as well as mobilizing the energy that sustains it – is not merely encouraged but sincerely recognized by our students' as their most important goal.

In supporting this goal, we need to achieve a number of interrelated aims. Firstly, we must help students to recognize when they are in their ZPD and to value the challenges this brings; secondly, we need to ensure that the inevitable consequences of working in the ZPD – errors, mistakes, accidents, *failure* – are perceived as vital precursors to learning²; and, thirdly, we need to provide a language that allows students to report back to us what degree of challenge they are facing, so that we can re-plan or recalibrate activities to match their needs.

To achieve this we explicitly teach our students Vygotsky's model of cognitive and skill development, introducing them to terms that help them identify how they are feeling during learning activities and how they might adjust either the task or their performance to feel differently. Our aim is that they make these adjustments to provide for the most suitable degree of challenge – and that, when necessary, they let us know what we can do to support them to manage this.

The figure below illustrates Vygotsky's model and the terms that describe activities within it:



We encourage students to spend as much time as possible being *stretched* in their ZPD, even though they know that this is likely to be more effortful, more error strewn and more unsettling than remaining in their comfort zones. We know, of course, that they will want – and need – to stay within their comfort zone on occasions: *cruising* in the CZ can build self-confidence, encourage 'automaticity'³, provide reassurance and allow for a breather! But there's not usually a great deal of new learning going on, and that's why we like to see students leaving it whenever possible. Equally, however, they are encouraged to recognize and respond to the *stressful* symptoms of straying into the anxiety or terror zone, where what

² To be fully successful, this calls for the adoption of what psychologist Carol S. Dweck terms a "growth mindset", the importance – and elusiveness – of which is discussed in elsewhere in this paper.

³ Automaticity refers to the development whereby, through rehearsal and practice, a mental operation that previously demanded conscious attention and direction becomes unconscious. Examples might include riding a bike, driving a car, using multiplication tables, assigning chemical symbols to elements and compounds, or speaking a foreign language.

is being asked of them is simply not within their grasp and where the only likely consequences will be panic and paralysis. Here, again, there is little or no useful learning taking place, only the desperate and counter-productive coping strategies of an unhappy student.

Ideally, students at ICHK will find themselves ready and willing to enter their ZPD on a daily basis. And, in keeping with our community focus as a school, they will feel mutually supported by both their teachers and their classmates when making the effort. Indeed, an important insight gained from Vygotsky's work is that the More Knowing Other need not and often will not be the teacher – it is just as likely that another student in the room can perform the role, being ready to unblock an impasse, clear up a misunderstanding or model a strategy for a friend or classmate. In this way, the social aspect of instruction and learning is exploited to the full.

As parents, you too can support your child by understanding the relative strengths of each of the zones for promoting (or inhibiting) learning – and by encouraging activity in the ZPD whenever your child feels they have the energy, confidence and sense of security to face the challenge.

3rd Strand – Psychosocial stages (Erik Erikson)



Erik Erikson was a psychologist who did most of his work in the 1930s to 50s. He was a student of Freud, and was influenced by the latter's theories of personality development; but he also gave weight to the influence of the social environment in a person's psychological development.

Thus his theory is generally called a psychosocial theory of personality development. Erikson's theory posits that every human being passes through several distinct and qualitatively different stages in life, from birth to death. The stages are held to be universal, and the ages at which one is said to have passed from one to another stage are also fairly predictably shared between peoples and cultures. However, this said, it must be kept in mind that Erikson himself did not have extensive knowledge of cultures and societies other than his own, and thus the universality of his theory can and should be scrutinized.

A central idea in Erikson's theory is that the individual faces a conflict at each of the 8 stages, which may or may not be successfully resolved within that stage. For example, the first stage, experienced from birth to about 18 months is termed 'Trust vs. Mistrust'. If the quality of care is good in infancy, the child learns to trust the world to meet her needs. If not, trust remains an unresolved issue throughout succeeding stages of development.

According to Erikson, although there is a predominant issue at each stage, the stages are not sealed against each other. Issues of one stage overlap with issues of another; how one has dealt with earlier issues determines how one will resolve later issues. Most important, there is a connection between present patterns of thinking and feeling, and earlier unresolved or resolved developmental issues. But Erikson also insisted that developmental blocks at any stage could be resolved at any point.

Approximate Age	Psycho Social Crisis
Infant - 18 months	Trust vs. Mistrust
18 months - 3 years	Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt
3 - 5 years	Initiative vs. Guilt
5 - 13 years	Industry vs. Inferiority
13 - 21 years	Identity vs. Role Confusion
21 - 39 years	Intimacy vs. Isolation
40 - 65 years	Generativity vs. Stagnation
65 and older	Ego Integrity vs. Despair

It is stages 4 and 5 that most concern the secondary school teacher, as these witness the child's growth from about 5 to 21 years of age. Overcoming the challenges and conflicts of these stages is a project that accompanies and has a direct effect on the academic journey.

Stage IV: 6 - 12 years. *Industry vs. Inferiority:* these are the years when a child makes decisions about whether to work hard academically and to gain competence in various areas of activity.

It is a time when children often seek and find praise for 'doing', for achievement. However, suggests Erikson, it is equally important to communicate with them about their 'being', so that the developing sense of 'self' does not become concerned only with technical competence at the expense of a fuller sense of personhood. By affirming competence and nothing more, adults can provide a strong motivation for children to pursue an activity, yet also make them value themselves for their achievements alone, so promoting a sense of comparison and, inevitably for some, inferiority. Even for the 'winners', we can ask: what happens to all those aspects of personality that are not visible to the world as 'achievement'?

Yet it remains vitally important to help children feel that they can pursue tasks and do them well. Small learning targets should be set in a variety of areas, together with firm and consistent expectations that children are capable of reaching realistic goals. For Erikson, this phase is directly linked to productivity in later life and so the primary and early secondary school is a time to validate the child in his or her own multiple talents and to build a work ethic.

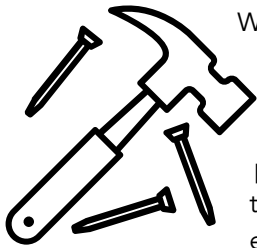
The later part of stage 4 witnesses a redefining of young people's relationship with the world – and, as Egan points out in his work on cognitive dispositions, this should usefully be reflected in the content of the curriculum and the teaching strategies used to introduce students to material.

Stage V: 12 - 19 years. *Identity vs. Role Confusion:* the questions arising at this stage are 'existential' in their character: 'Who am I?', 'What are my values?', 'What is my identity?' Identity can be defined in part as the ability to exercise agency and choice, and this commonly becomes a core concern for young people in this phase of their lives.

Being able to take initiative at school and show proof of learning are fundamental, but, for Erikson, this is also the stage where values have to be chosen, beliefs reassessed and the 'self' explored. Erikson suggests that, if values are imposed rather than chosen by the child, they are unlikely to be internalised and there will be an associated lack of meaning in later life.

How should we respond to the characteristics of this developmental stage at ICHK? Of supreme importance is the need for an open and warm relationship between staff and students, so keeping channels of communication open and allowing for teachers to remain relevant as students begin exploring wider issues and possibilities. As it is evident that role models promoted by the media or society at large influence young adults, it is important that we help them appreciate that wholesale imitation is limiting and impedes creativity. This is also the stage at which students can usefully be encouraged to explore issues of selfhood, responsibility to society and the world at large – and so we review the curriculum continuously to identify opportunities for greater scope and engagement.

4th Strand – Cognitive Dispositions: Romantic & Philosophic (Kieran Egan)⁴



We can think of a child's journey to adulthood as a slow climb through five different ecological zones. In each zone, children come to understand the world in different ways, each building on the kinds of understanding they have previously achieved. There are many possible names for these zones, and there could be less than or more than five, depending on what you believe is centrally important in education. The five we use at ICHK are described by Kieran Egan, a professor of education at Simon Fraser University, based on the different ways we learn to use language. He called the five zones Somatic, Mythic, Romantic, Philosophic and Ironic.

The process of climbing through these five zones is not a steady and inevitable one. Children do not "naturally" develop one kind of understanding at a particular age, and another kind at another age. It is important to realize that these kinds of understanding are not completely distinct from one another, just as one ecological zone blends into the next with no clear dividing line. Nor are later kinds of understanding necessarily "better" than earlier kinds. Each kind of understanding brings new capacities with it, but these work best if they can be combined with earlier capacities rather than replacing them. In working with students, the challenge is not only mastery of new tools for understanding the world, but also not losing mastery of old tools.

Almost any topic can be made meaningful for children at almost any age and stage of development, but this requires a deep rethinking of teaching and learning. In order for teachers to be able to manage this feat, they have to develop the ability to construct and reconstruct meaning along with their students. Understanding the chief characteristics of Egan's five stages provides teachers with a blueprint for discovering content and designing activities that will appeal most readily to students at different stages of their development.

Somatic Understanding (Birth to 3)

Somatic understanding is corporeal, physical, bodily understanding. The child's own body, the way that body moves around in space, and the way it relates to the objects and persons it encounters in space, are the primary tool, the first way of making sense of experience. We must recognize the importance of this kind of understanding to children's development – and highlight the effort required to retain and enrich it as the child gets older. As other kinds of understanding are developed, it can be quite challenging to maintain mastery of the body and its senses.

Mythic Understanding (3 – 6)

It is in the transition to oral language that human understanding becomes quite distinct from that of other species: learning to make sense of the world not through direct experience, but through conventionalized sounds that evoke and blend certain aspects of experience in novel ways, is an extraordinary leap – one propelled by imagination. The term "mythic", from the Greek mythos (story), is chosen by Egan to highlight one crucial feature of oral language: the story constitutes its central structure for communication. The story form not only organizes content, but also directs our feelings about that content: that is why it is

⁴ This section is adapted from **What is Imaginative Education?** by Claudia Ruitenberg, which can be found on the IERG website)

memorable. One can identify a number of basic features that help stories accomplish this, even though not all are necessarily present in a single story.

Romantic Understanding (6 – 14)

Romantic Understanding helps us organize our experience through an exploration of the extremes of experience and the limits of reality. This way of making sense of the world derives from the way that written language has been used in Western culture: it is the personifying or humanizing tendency, in which the principle of reality is becoming more important, that most clearly marks the Romantic from the Mythic zone. Central to mastery of the tools of Romantic Understanding is a sense of the self as an autonomous unit, which interacts with but is separate from the world.

Limits and extremes provide a basic organizing principle for Romantic understanding. An exploration of limits and extremes gives a sense of the boundaries within which we need to make sense of experience: not only the limits of reality “out there,” but also the limits of human adventures possible in that reality. Heroes and heroines show that human beings not only live within constraints, but also that, at times, they manage to overcome them.

Philosophic Understanding (14 - ?)

Written language, of course, can be used for many purposes – and it is its use for developing a systematic understanding of the world that propels the child into the zone of Philosophic understanding. The word “philosophic” is derived from the Greek *philosophia*, love of wisdom. The Philosophic mind focuses on the connections among things, seeing laws, theories, and larger purpose as tying together the previously disconnected phenomena and experiences. One of the most important connections is that between the individual and the world. The Romantic understanding of the self as separate from but involved in the world now receives a Philosophic explanation.

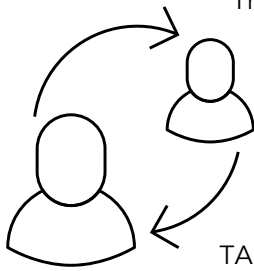
Generalization is central to Philosophic understanding: the search for new organizing principles to make sense of the multitude of experiences in the adolescent’s expanding horizons.

Ironic Understanding (?)

The great appeal of Philosophic understanding is that it will finally and completely explain the world through which the students have made their way for fifteen or twenty years. If this kind of understanding is well developed (as it presently is for relatively few people), one will eventually run up against the limits of systematic, theoretic thinking, and the illusion that language and/or theory can ever capture everything that is important about the world. From this realization grows Ironic understanding.

Ironic understanding has a certain reflective quality to it. When we use it together with other kinds of understanding, we not only make sense of our experience, but we are also aware that that meaning has been constructed by us, and does not exist “out there” in some objective world. An Ironic understanding tells us that the way we have made sense of our world is dependent upon our historical and cultural perspective.

5th Strand – Transactional Analysis (Eric Berne)

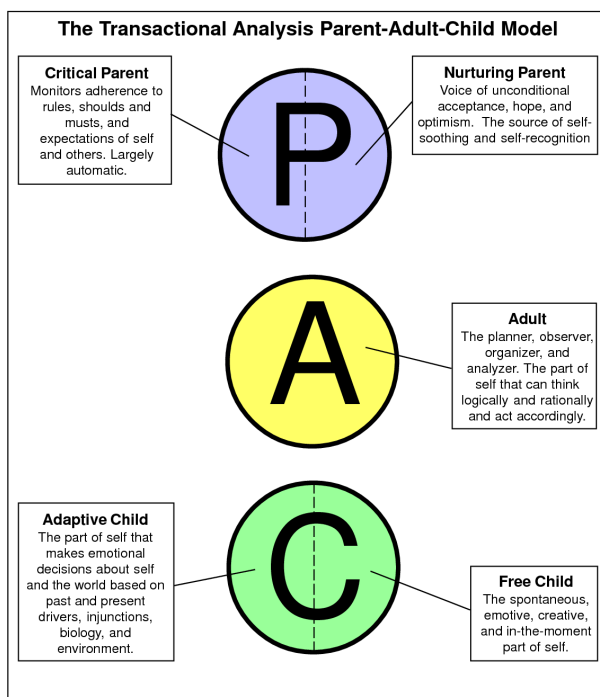


Transactional Analysis (TA) is a theory of interpersonal communication and a rational approach to understanding behaviour. Transactions refer to the communications between people and occur when any one person relates to any other person. Each transaction is made up from a stimulus and a response, which may or may not include a verbal component.

TA is based on the premise that every human has a child, adult and parent psyche, and that very different behaviours and modes of communication tend to originate from each of these 'ego states'. According to Eric Berne, the originator of TA, people exercise a good deal more control over their lives than they often think – provided, that is, they have, first, the ability to identify behaviours they want to change and, second, the desire to implement the change. They are likely achieve greater success if they can identify their own ego states and those of others; learning to sidestep or otherwise avoid the counterproductive transactions that are causing impasse and confusion.

It is people's feelings at any given time that determine which ego states they communicate from and, at any moment, events can trigger a shift from one state to another. Ego states, and particularly our Child and Parent states, are developed from our life experiences, including those from our very first years as infants and toddlers; and are retained both consciously and unconsciously in our responses and decision-making. Berne suggests that these experiences give rise to a 'life script' that can set us up to be more or less hopeful, cooperative, empathetic, industrious and so on. To bring about change, we must contract with ourselves and with others, in order to collaborate towards achieving the shift in behaviour that will lead to desired goals. Without people's *permission* to change, it is difficult to have an effect on one's life script.

This simple diagram provides a useful introduction to TA:



The goal of TA, then, is to enable individuals to remain in the ego-state (or combination of ego states) that best promotes the activity they are planning. No one ego-state is necessarily better than others, but each one will best support a particular range of activities and will become a hindrance to others. For general purposes, Adult is the most effective state from which to plan, prioritize, monitor and re-evaluate, and so it is that students should, so far as possible, be encouraged to relate to their teachers and other students as Adults – that is, as sensible, informed people making rational, intelligent decisions in the ‘here and now’.

Students are most likely to be able to sustain an Adult state if they feel OK about themselves as people and learners. Students who feel OK about themselves often:

- *Have a healthy respect for themselves and others*
- *Are aware of their behaviour and have a sense of fairness*
- *Are aware of the needs of others and will accept other students’ ideas and materials*
- *Have an ability to encourage, praise and help other students*
- *Have the confidence to try out new things*
- *Show a desire to do their best*
- *Are assertive, but not aggressive⁵*

One of the three philosophical assumptions that underlie the theory of TA is that people are essentially OK and that, even when their behaviour is not useful and/or acceptable, they have a rational part that can be appealed to and worked with to bring about change. Two further assumptions build on this starting point: they assert that everyone has the capacity to think and that people decide their own destiny and these decisions can be changed.

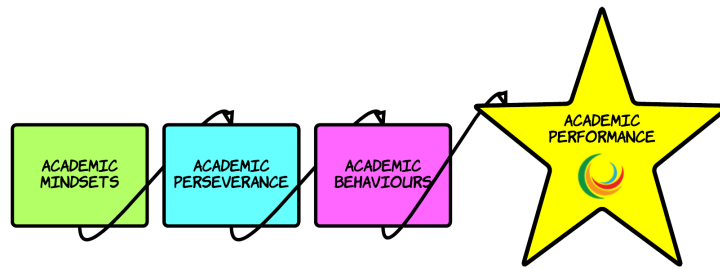
A key aspect in allowing people to feel OK about themselves and others is to provide them with what TA terms “strokes”. Strokes are moments of acknowledgment or recognition. For pre-linguistic babies and infants these strokes will tend to be literal touches of the body but, as we develop as children and adults, strokes tend to become increasingly abstract and non-physical.

Other people can show us that they have recognized our existence by smiling, laughing *with*, complimenting and assenting to us – all of which we can term “positive strokes”. These will tend to make us feel good about ourselves. Equally, however, by frowning, admonishing, criticizing and laughing at people, we can give negative strokes. One of the interesting insights of TA is that, because they crave recognition above all else, people will often prefer negative strokes to no strokes at all: at least negative strokes confirm that they are noticed and are being taken seriously.

‘Recognition hunger’, then, can lead to a situation where students become habituated to behaving in unproductive and unhelpful ways because, by so doing, they gain the attention that they are otherwise denied when their ‘acceptable’ conduct renders them invisible in the class. Giving sincere and authentic positive strokes is a critical step towards encouraging someone to feel OK about themselves, and so gather the confidence and strength to take risks and step outside of their comfort zone.

⁵ Taken from *Behaviour Management in the Classroom: A Transactional Analysis Approach* Newell & Jeffrey, David Fulton Publishers, London 2002

What does 5+1 mean practically for teachers?



From *Teaching Adolescents to Become Learners: Literature Review 2012* -
University of Chicago Consortium on School Research

Growth mindset:

- Sincerely believing that students can and will achieve more if they can be encouraged to adopt and maintain good learning habits;
- Using growth language and avoiding the language of 'ability';
- Modelling a growth mindset yourself – demonstrating that you, too, are a learner;
- Focussing on behaviour rather than the person, and encouraging changes in behaviour to improve learning potential.

Learning Zone:

- Knowing your students well enough to appreciate what constitutes their learning zone and designing and enacting experiences that provide the right differentiated potentials for them to operate within that zone;
- Being aware that time spent in the LZ is always more tiring than when one is 'cruising' in the comfort zone, so that sympathetic management of energy levels and opportunities to refuel are an important part of the art of teaching;
- Recognising, too, the far limits of the LZ: the paralysis or terror zone, and monitoring learning to guard against students getting out of their depth and losing hope;
- Explicitly identifying the LZ and providing students with the tools to recognize the occasions on which they are being stretched.

Cognitive dispositions:

- Understanding what makes for romantic as against philosophic learning experiences (and, for older students, ironic experiences);
- Designing lesson plans that match with the dispositions of the students and which, in Years 7 and 8 especially, blend romantic and philosophic activities and materials to cater for different learners, including looking specifically for opportunities to bridge between dispositions, to cater for emerging preferences, to introduce new emphases and perspectives;
- Using stories as a primary technology for ordering, animating and, thereby, making memorable concepts and content.

Psychosocial developmental stages:

- Being sympathetic to the psychological 'work' characteristic of the years between 11 and 18 years of age (what Erikson would term the late 4th phase and 5th phase of development) i.e. initially, sensitivity to the struggles that some children face in demonstrating competence in a world of things (school work) and, subsequently,

equal sensitivity to the challenges of establishing competence in a world of others (the identity work of the teenage years, when young people need to renegotiate their sense of self in relation to significant others, which is liable to include the move to identify new significant others);

- Recognising that the negotiation of a novel or modified identity is liable to have at least two effects – first, to canalize mental energy and attention into areas other than those that have, up to that point, been typically the point of focus (e.g. away from schoolwork, relations with parents and siblings and towards personal interests, friends and media representations); and, second, a period of experimentation and testing out. Reacting to this with a sense of proportion and without scandalizing or personalizing is a sympathetic response, to be framed within an overall understanding of health and life chances.

Transactional Analysis:

- Fostering adult to adult transactions i.e. communications based in the here and now, without prejudice, without baggage, giving permission to change and delivering on that permission by offering a patient, realistic, sympathetic response to the performance of a young person who is liable to be, as above, dividing their time and energy between the school agenda and their emerging need to redefine and re-equip themselves for the challenge of living their adult life;
- Avoiding negative parent mode i.e. being careful neither to criticize nor overly support in ways that encourage over-adaptation or learned helplessness.
- Crafting a well-judged, nicely modulated learning zone in which students feel safe to perform as respected adult personas, which might not mean giving 100% to the teacher's agenda all of the time, precisely because there is other work to be done, but in which feedback is honest, considerate and constructive to improved performance.

+1

- Each student is unique and all students have their own individual learning needs, so that even when they appear similar to one another and to models we carry in our heads of this or that type of student, we should remind ourselves that they deserve our individual care and attention.