

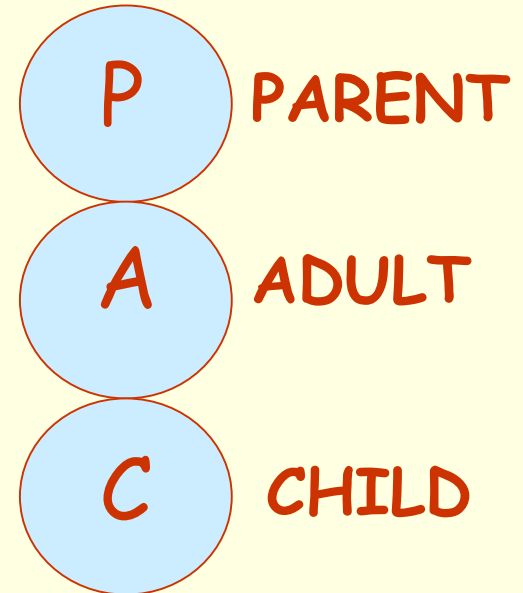
PART TWO

Understanding Your Anger Process [so you can manage it better]



Ego States - our multiple 'personalities'

- Eric Berne, the mastermind behind Transactional Analysis [TA] Psychotherapy, identified different states of mind which we all have.
- He called these different states of mind Ego States.
- In many ways it's like having multiple personalities: which 'personality' we bring out depends on the situation we find ourselves in.



To learn more about Eric Berne read 'Eric Berne' by Ian Stewart.



P

P = Parent Ego State Sometimes we repeat behaviour displayed by our mother, father, or grandparent, when we were children. If you had a parent figure who was angry and aggressive, sometimes you will repeat that behaviour.



A

A = Adult Ego State Sometimes we are wise, logical and rational, 'Have our common sense head on' and respond rationally and calmly to whatever is going on in the here and now.



C

C = Child Ego State Sometimes we think and behave like the child we used to be which may include angry, selfish, petulant or bullying behaviour.

When you display anger, who are you and how old are you?

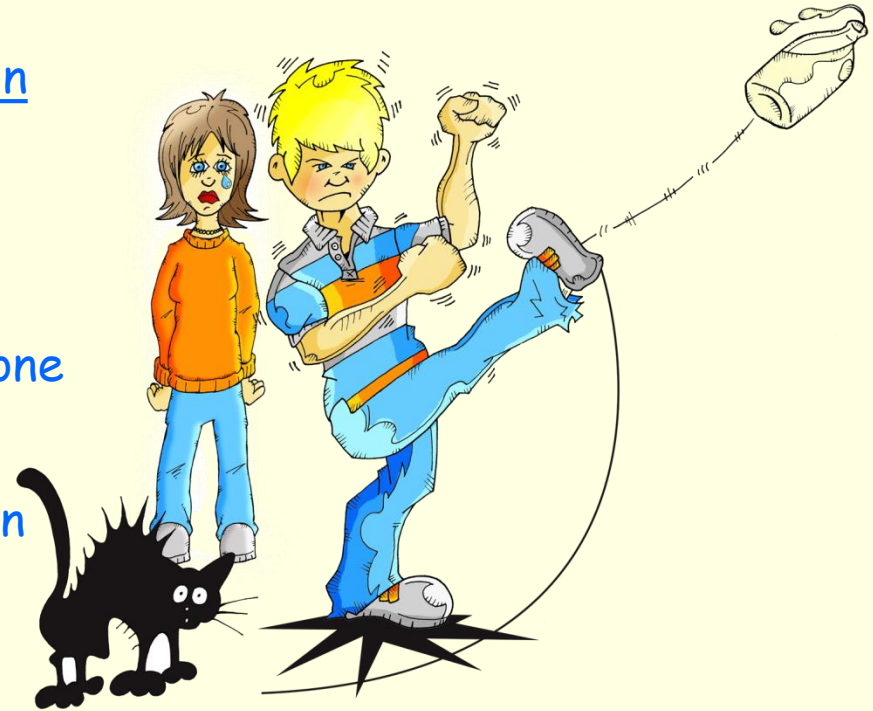
- We switch rapidly between Parent, Adult or Child depending on the circumstances we find ourselves in at any moment.
- When you display anger have you turned into your childhood mom or dad for the moment?
- Or are you replaying childhood behaviour.



It's vital to be able to release anger and frustration

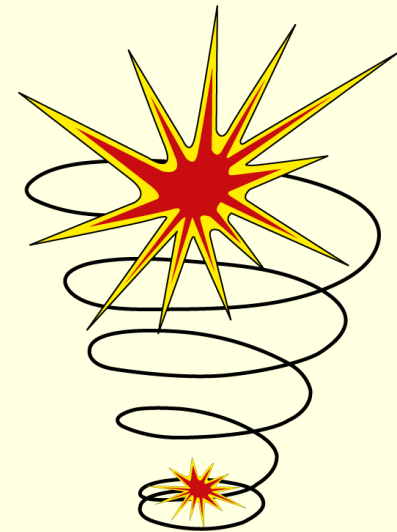
Anger Management is not about suppressing anger - it's the opposite, in fact. It's about resisting your angry autopilot reaction and learning to release your anger and frustration in ways which don't hurt yourself or anyone else.

If you 'bottle up' anger and frustration you will find it impossible to achieve self control. At some points you will 'blow' with 'over the top' inappropriate releases of anger and frustration.



Anger has many dimensions

- Although I have sometimes used only the word 'anger' in this programme, I also include under this heading aggressive reactions caused by hurt, jealousy, feeling anxious, frustration, resentment and stress. In fact, any state of mind which may lead to an 'over the top' aggressive reaction.
- These feelings are perfectly natural in all human beings. Problems result when they are expressed or acted on inappropriately.



Anger is OK - It's how you handle it that counts

- Anger is OK, it's one of the core emotions of all human beings.
- It's normal to feel anger when we are faced with unfairness and injustice.
- Anger is often a source of energy to right wrongs and to protect those we love.
- There is nothing wrong with feeling and displaying anger - providing we don't express it, or act, in ways which hurt others or ourselves.
- It's certainly not OK to use anger displays to bully, manipulate and control others.



The difference between anger and rage

- **Anger** usually has identifiable sources - things that have happened or are happening which can be identified and focused on in anger management work.
- **Rage** is often without specific identifiable causes and may originate from early development experiences in childhood. The person is not angry about anything, or with anybody, in particular - but is explosively angry very quickly.
- **Both anger and rage** benefit from anger release techniques, but rage is more likely to need counselling or psychotherapy too!



How do you respond when angry or hurt?

HOT RESPONSE

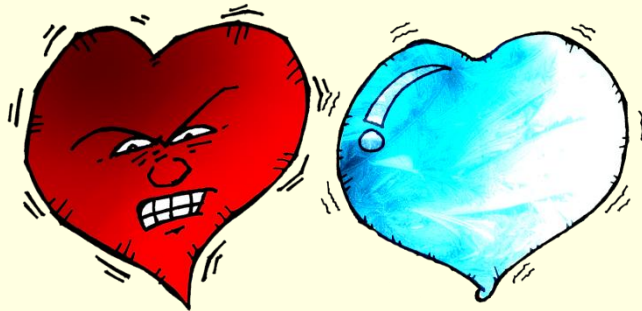
Aggressive, intimidating behaviour including verbally abusive rants



Your priority is to learn Impulse Control and how to be assertive instead



Or a mixture of both?



COLD RESPONSE

Pushing hurt and anger down inside. Fighting back in passive aggressive ways including being icy cold with the other person without explaining why



Your priority is to learn to be assertive instead



You need to learn to release anger safely and to use anger reduction techniques



Emotional trading stamps

How we store anger and hurt

- When we store anger and hurt it's like collecting emotional trading stamps and cashing them in with 'over the top' reactions.
- Unresolved anger and hurt is a major factor in conflict and need to be released in ways that don't harm yourself or anyone else.
- How to do this is described in Part Nine.



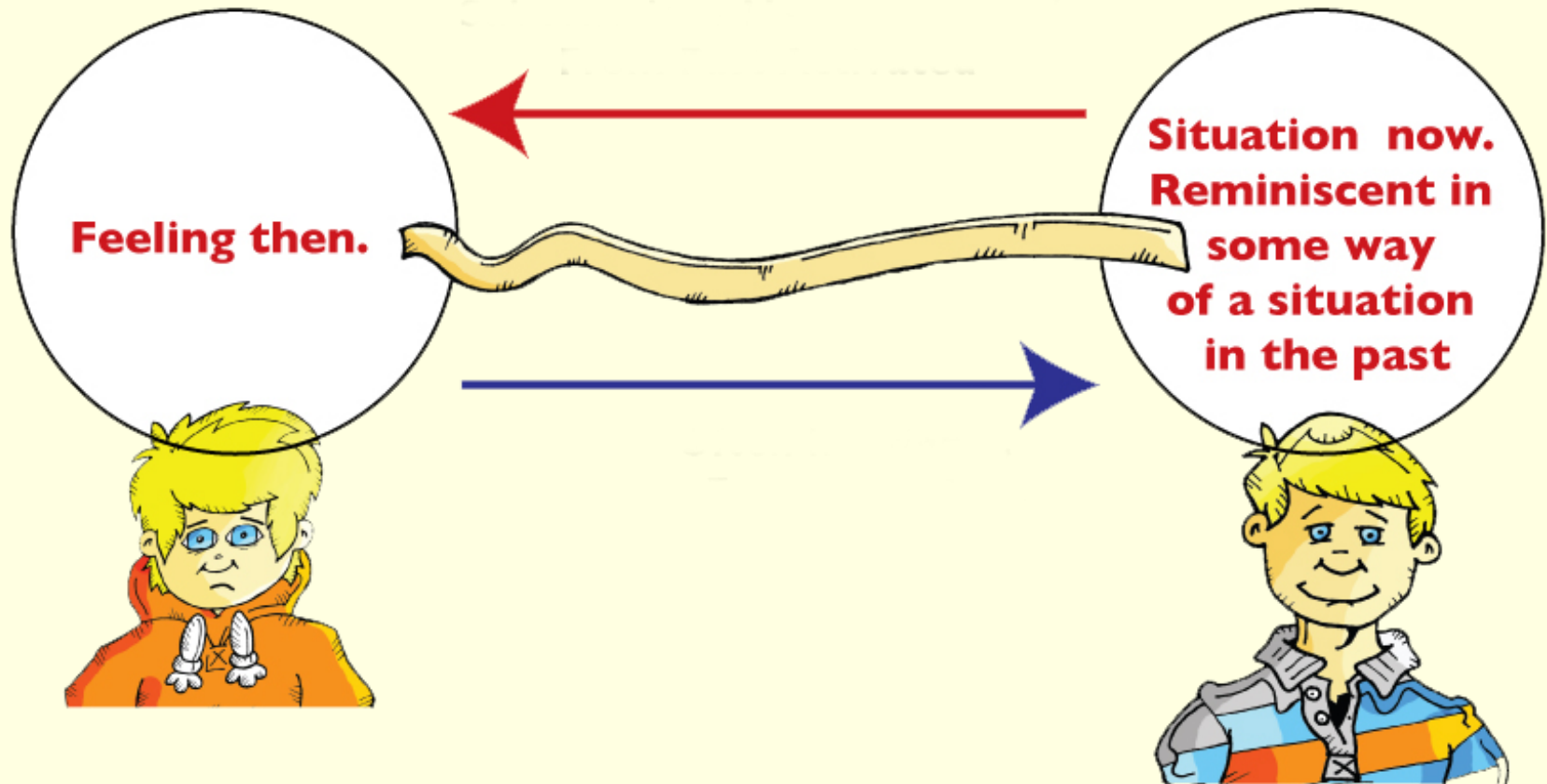
Rubber banding

How the past drives feelings in the present

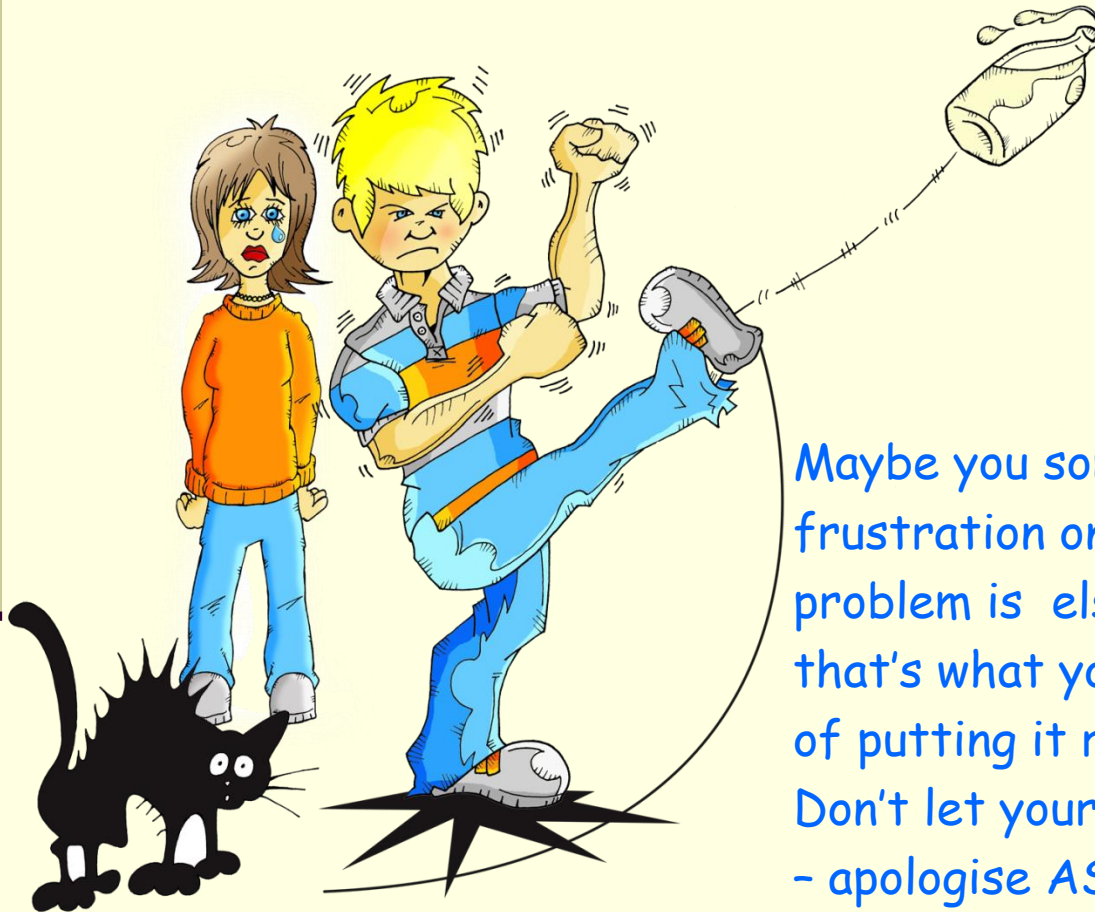
- Rubber Banding is a subconscious automatic process which causes us to re-experience feelings of hurt and anger from the past.
- When anything happening to us in the here and now reminds us, at a conscious or subconscious level, of something in the past, we get the same feeling now that we got then. We re-experience the 'there and then' emotion all over again.
- We can find ourselves feeling angry, sad, afraid or guilty even though the roots of our feeling are years ago, maybe even rooted in 'forgotten' childhood experiences.



The rubber band which pulls past feelings into the present



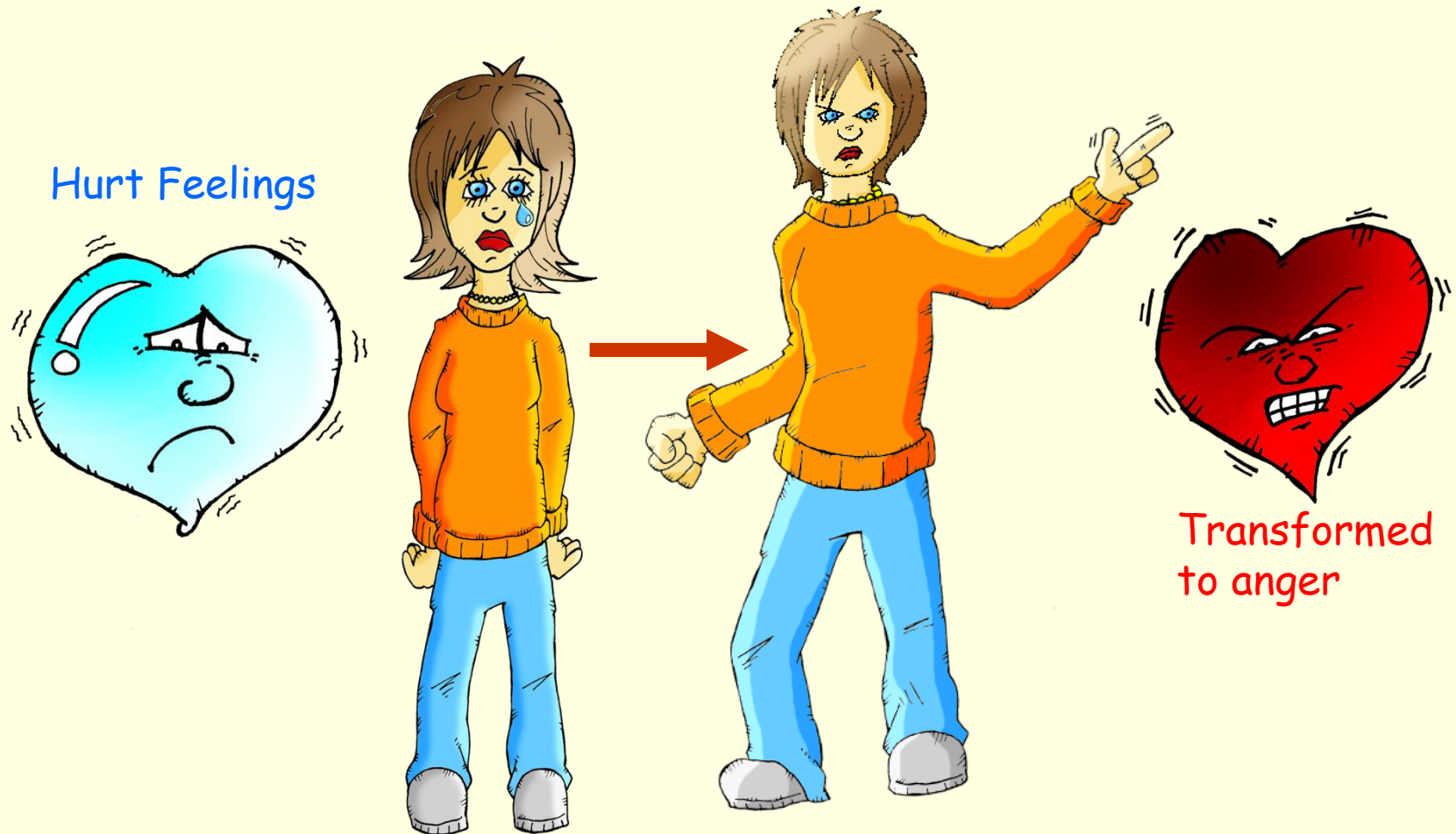
Displacement - or 'kicking the cat', is when we take it out on the wrong person



When we are angry or frustrated we may 'take it out' on people around us. Anger and frustration must be released, but not on the wrong person.

Maybe you sometimes take out your frustration on your partner when the real problem is elsewhere!? When you realise that's what you have done, find some way of putting it right as soon as possible. Don't let your pride stand in the way - apologise ASAP.

When dealing with anger look for the hurt behind the anger



I usually find that there are hurt feelings behind angry feelings

The impact of alcohol - you already know it.....

If you get angry when you have had a drink, you need to avoid 'risky' subjects and situations while under the influence.

Excess alcohol switches off impulse control methods taught in anger management programmes.

