Dealing with Cultural Differences

Subjective reflections using the filter of TA
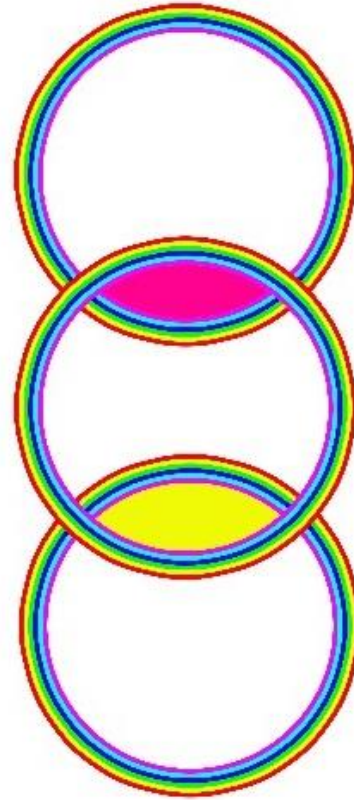
Uta Höhl TSTA C and Dave Spenceley TSTA P

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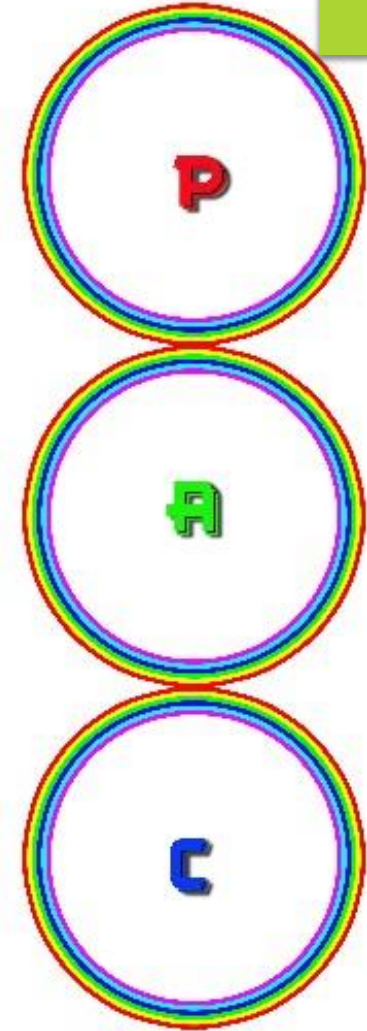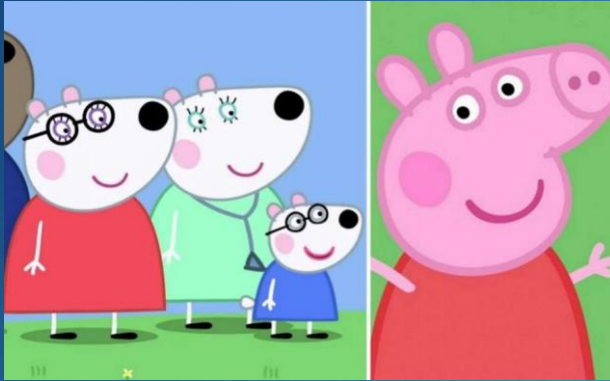Significant others and early life experiences continue to travel with you throughout life.

As I tell my stories and failings - Which models of TA would you use to understand the process?
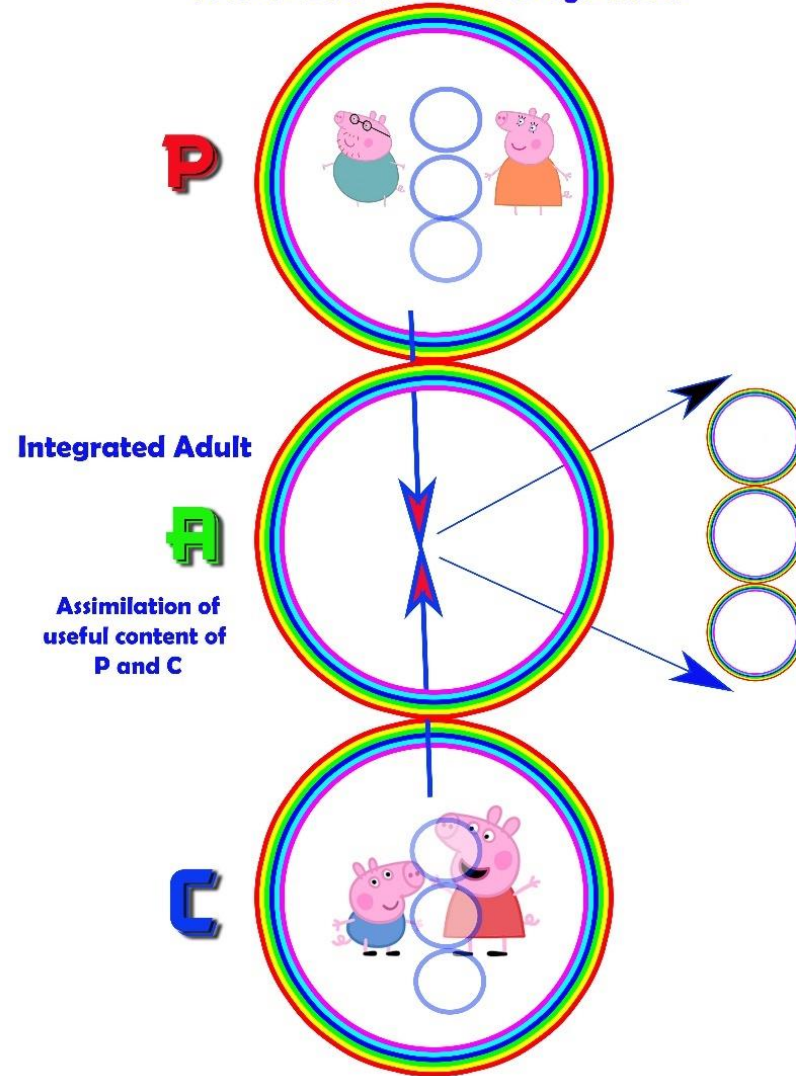

Contaminated Ego State Diagram
Eric Berne

Integrating Adult

Peppa's friend
Penny Polar bear and her two mum's

one of whom is a Dr - one cooks spaghetti

Second order structure of ego states

P

Integrated Adult

A

Assimilation of useful content of P and C

C

The Protocol

- The protocol is the un-rememberable and unforgettable experience

- TAJ -July 2006: Cornell and Landaiche:

The protocol is felt and lived in the immediacy and intensity of one's body

Developing cultural differences

Cultural scripting is one aspect of developing a cultural identity and maintaining the continuity and survival of a culture, whether it is of cultures within different families, or within different regions and countries.

Terry and Jerome White (TAJ 1975, Volume 5, Issue 1)

"Cultural scripting is the set of reinforcements or limitations established by Parent values embodied in the institution of a culture."
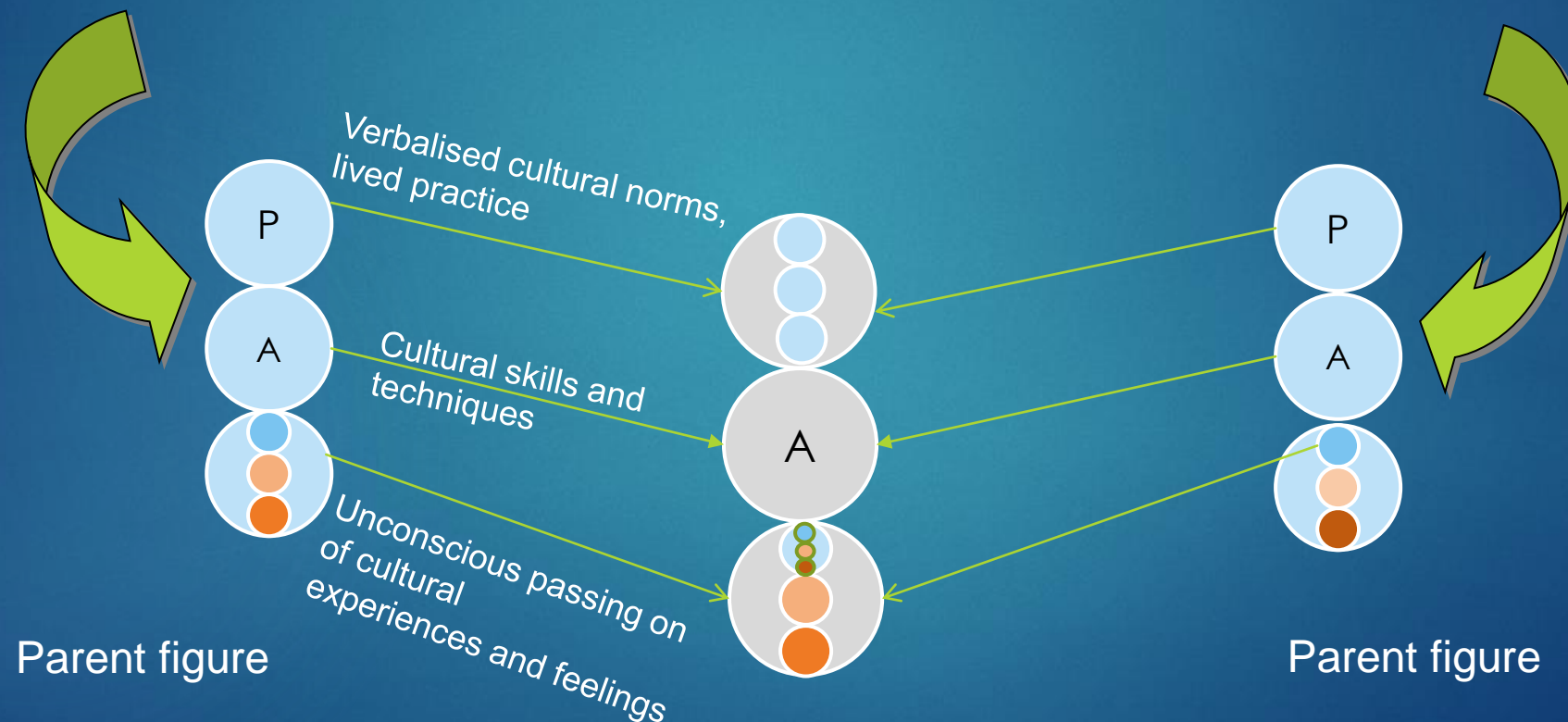
- Most of the TA theory has viewed cultural scripting primarily on terms of transmitting values, prejudices, attitudes and is often focused almost entirely on the role of P2 and P1.

- There is also cultural scripting in C1, including the important sensory experiences of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. These are primarily experienced preverbally and non-verbally.

- The archaic Child ego state responds viscerally to these sensory configurations.

- There is also a difference from culture to culture in the way the functions of A 1 (the little professor) is valued and therefore how intuition is developed as a skill.
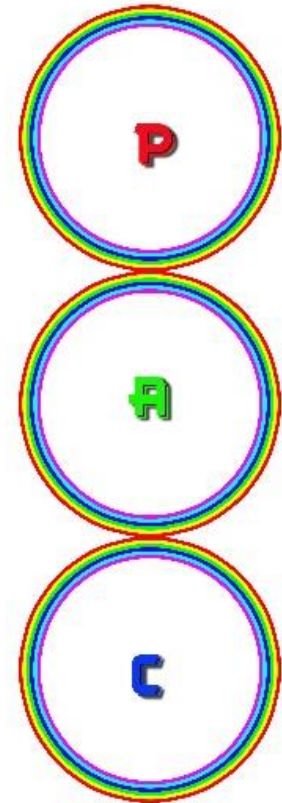
Cultural Scripting... Uta Höhl-Spenceley

Cultural influences: values, behavioural patterns, attitudes, cultural identity (we are), and historical events.

Verbalised cultural norms, lived practice

Cultural skills and techniques

Unconscious passing on of cultural experiences and feelings

Parent figure

Parent figure

The omnipresence of cultural scripting

Cultural scripting needs not to be deliberate or consistent, but merely sufficient to reinforce already habituated patterns established by the family.

The family's impact lies in the nature of the dependent relationship.

In the extra familial institutions, the reinforcement is imposed on an already predisposed individual.

English by birth

-

Yorkshire - by the grace of God

Since 2007 Bucharest has become Dave's third home.

It is where I run YTCi my TA training and psychotherapy programme.

Child-pleasure

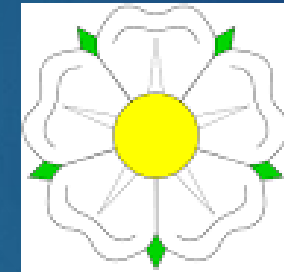## Uta's family in Germany versus Dave's family in England

After much struggle I Yorkshireman Dave - am now a proud German, living close to Nürnberg – which is in Bavaria.
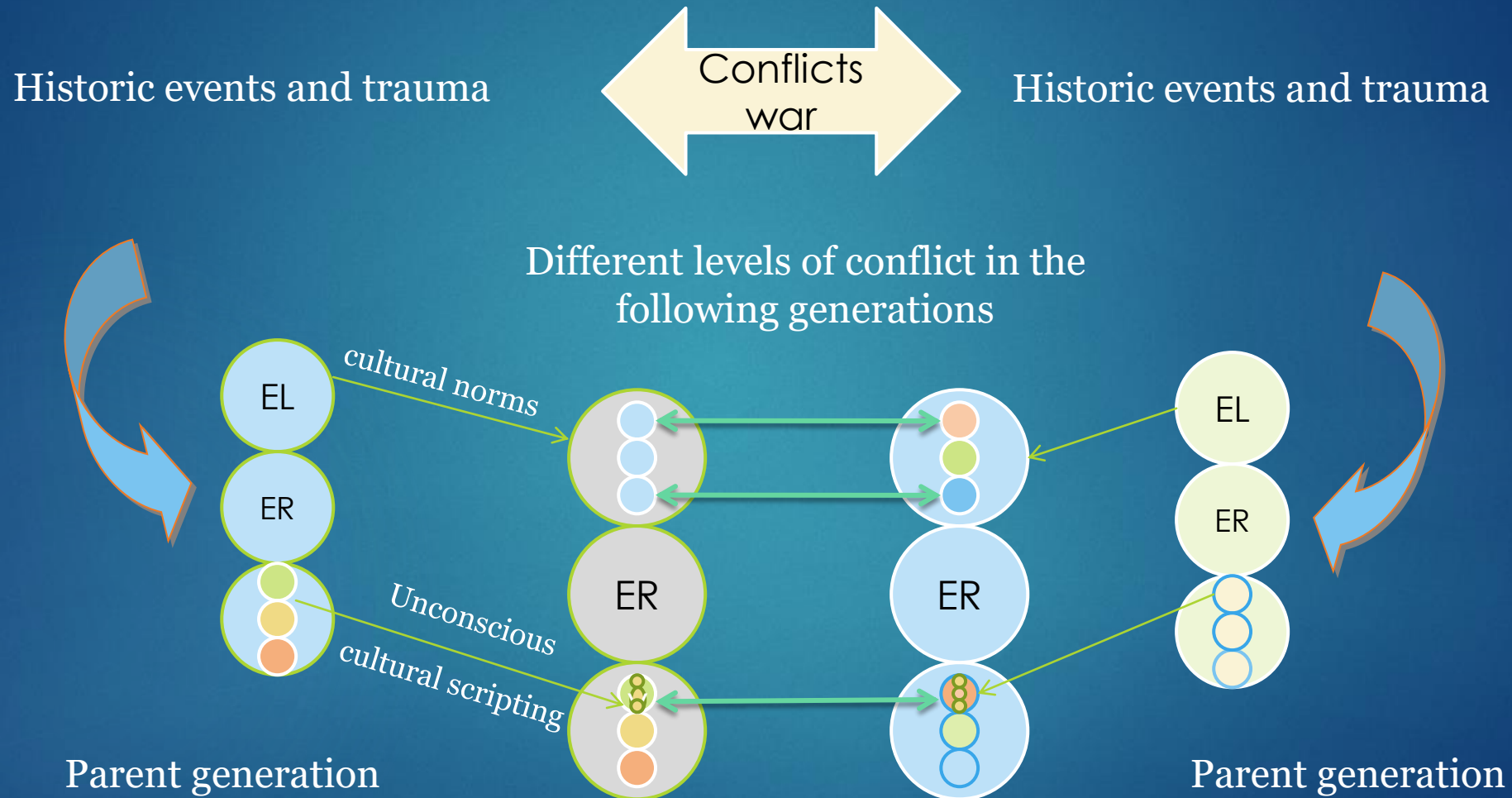
Uta Höhl - tells me that we are definitely Franken and not Bavarian!

Individually and socially what are we carrying from those events.... ?

Why is history repeating itself in Europe today?

Impact of historic conflicts and family traumas on relationships of multicultural couples

Conflicts war

Historic events and trauma

Historic events and trauma

Different levels of conflict in the following generations

EL

cultural norms

ER

Unconscious cultural scripting

ER

ER

EL

ER

Parent generation

Parent generation

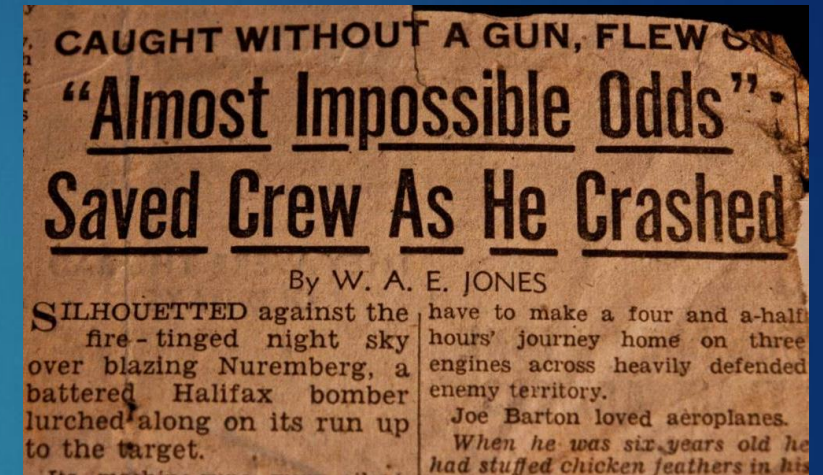# family – history - reconciliation

She was bombed in Nürnberg, suffering a broken leg as she fled to the bomb shelter

She remembers a "hill of dead bodies" in the city centre

My (Uta's) mother, was 3 years old at the start and 9 at the end of WW2

Dave's dad (circled) was in the RAF
several of his comrades and friends died – including on the Nürnberg bombing raid

He had saved the news paper cuttings regarding one hero who died in that bombing raid.

We still have them

Following the war Dave's grandmother married a German, however this was kept a secret, even within the family – we only knew him as Uncle Charlie.

However in 2003, long after they had all died we discovered that uncle Charlie was in fact Karl Kraus from Hamburg.

Dave's grandfather on his mothers side was a "white feather" – a man who refused to fight in the ww1 because of his religious convictions.

Meeting "others"

- When we meet others we are confronted with unfamiliar customs, and different ways of living together, achieving aims or solving conflicts.

- We often miss-interpret non-verbal signals and behaviours, responding as if we are within in our own culture.

- We may feel uncomfortable: The origins of the discomfort may be connected with experiences, traumas of previous generations and their prejudices.

- We will miss familiar smells, tastes, noises, which make as feel "at home"

- We will probably not be even aware that what we experience is a cultural issue.

So - What do we do after we say hello?

- "We are O.K. – the others are O.K."

- Experiencing differences with all the advantages and disadvantages of each culture

- Being curious about the others frame of reference – having a stimulating exchange

- Appreciating the habits, attitudes, values, smells, tastes… and richness of your own and the others culture

- Learning from the "other", being stimulated

- Expanding our frame of reference and starting to develop our world view.

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TA and Group work:

Our cultural protocol / script evolved in relationships.

In TA groups of various kinds we meet others with cultural differences. This provides a space for healing and growing together in relationship.

S H Foulkes described 3 forms of speech patterns in groups as a relational progression of 1 person – 2 person – 3 person psychologies:

> Monologue

> Dialogue which is the seeking for the other and intimacy

> Discourse, a chorus of a group finding meaning together

"From the Couch to the Circle – Group Analytic Psychotherapy in Practice"
John R Schlapobersky quotes S H Foulkes:

"We are communicating better but we are still not out of the woods."

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