

Chapter 3

Pictorial Representation of Early Maladaptive Schemas and Modes

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In Schema Therapy (ST), the case conceptualization and the psychoeducation of modes and schemas play an important role. When working with Children and Adolescents (CA), we encounter patients who are still in the natural process of emotional and cognitive development, so the capacity to understand theoretical models is limited. Similarly, adults who are suffering from severe mental health disorders or emotional crisis might also be, to a certain extent, cognitively and/or emotionally “and therefore overwhelmed by abstract models consisting of the commonly-used circles, squares, ellipses and other geometrical figures (Fig. 1).

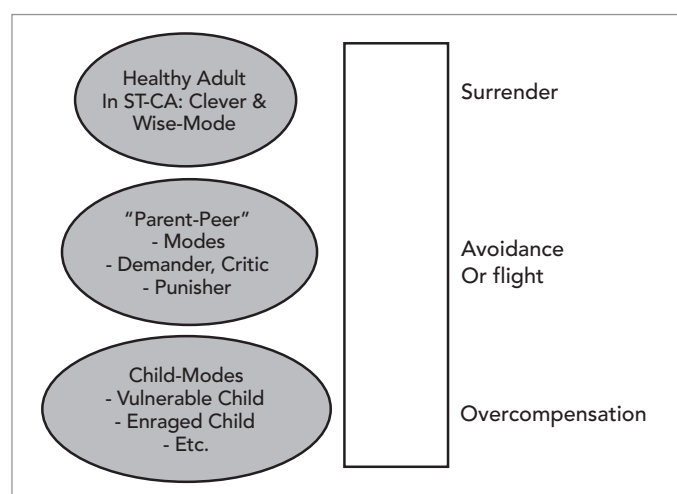


Fig. 1 Schema-Mode-Model for Adults

In ST-CA we have had good results visualizing the mode model with small man like figures that are positioned inside a bigger figure to represent the whole person (compare: Inner Team, Schulz von Thun, 1998). Additionally, we add red wedges onto the figure's skin to signify the patient's schemas comparable with “wounds” (Fig. 2). In ST-CA we conceptualize the schema-mode-model together with the SORCK-model (Fig. 3): a difficult situation (S) represents in this context the trigger that hits the patient's painful wound (=schema); first the small figure of the *Vulnerable Child* mode is activated. After this activation other figures (modes) come, one after another, into play and at the end of the dynamic mode process a specific mode for the patient's symptom (dysfunctional coping mode) comes into fore and dictates the patient's behavior. The so-called *Clever-Wise-Team* is in charge to soothe the *Vulnerable Child* and support other child modes (eg. *Angry Child*) to find a need oriented solution.

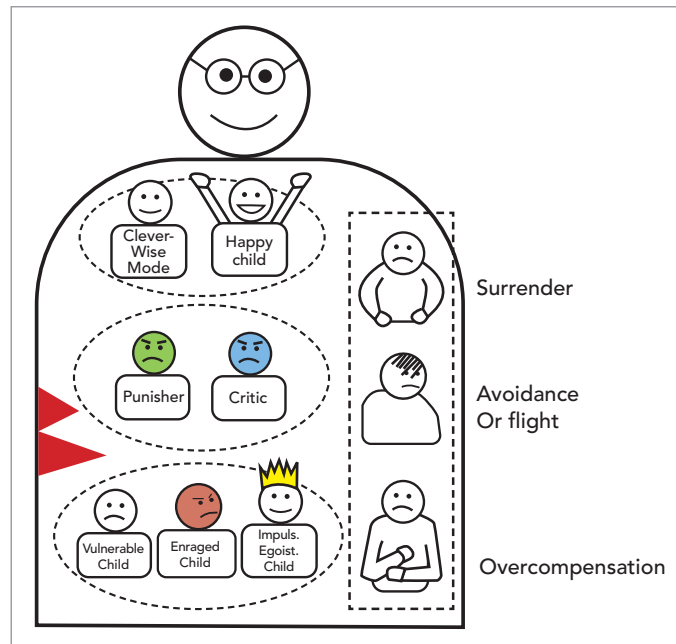


Fig. 2: Schema-Mode-Model for Children & Adolescents (CA)

Summary: This way of case conceptualization is usually highly-accepted by patients, of all ages (incl. parents), since it is in its nature pictorial, interactive, incorporates the emotional needs, and allows the integration of positive modes as well (e.g. resources, and strengths in the Clever-Wise-Team). The SORCK-model (Kanfer & Saslow, 1969, 1974) can be easily integrated; and it is easy to learn how to create such a mode-sketch.

More information: www.schematherapy-for-children.de

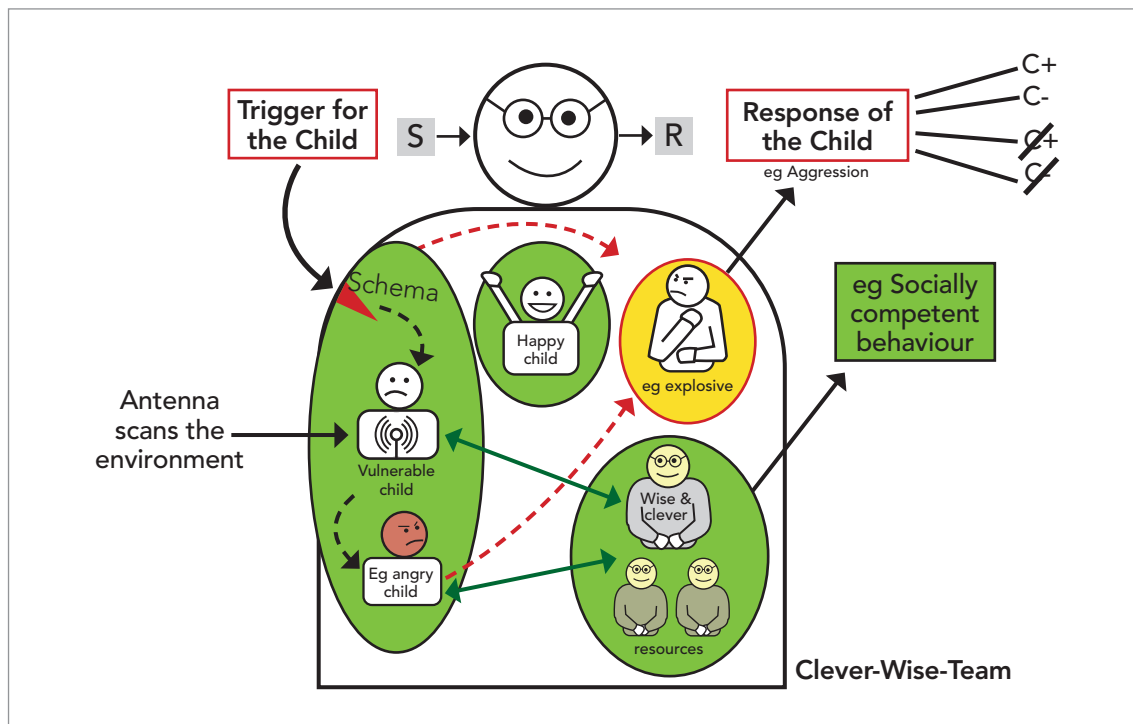


Fig. 3: Schema-Mode-Model including SORCK-Model

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