

Navigate the social Landscape of your Brain

Based on Ego state personality theory and describing a simple mapping tool to assist clients achieve success more easily

Jan Sky

[**Ego-state therapy** is a psychodynamic approach to treat various behavioural and cognitive problems within a person. It uses techniques that are common in group and family therapy, but with an individual patient, to resolve conflicts that manifest in a "family of self" within a single individual.]

Presentation:

Imagine a symphony orchestra where there are many different instruments all playing in harmony and creating beautiful music. Sometimes the violins will play solo, sometimes the big base, or maybe the trumpets – it just depends on the sound that's required and the response that sought from the audience.

Now image that YOU are that orchestra ...

That you are made up of many different parts, and sometimes these parts play harmoniously together, sometimes not so.

Our brain forms maps of our behaviour and over time a cluster of our behaviour repertoire forms what we know of as our 'every day' behaviour. These maps can change, yet unless pruning of the neural network occurs, they remain for a long time. Sometimes dormant, sometimes active. The maps I'm referring to are of course the neural pathways of the brain.

A cluster of our behaviour repertoire may be represented by several different instruments in the orchestra and my sense is that only one part will be active in any given time. This particular part could be supported by others, yet plays alone on the main stage.

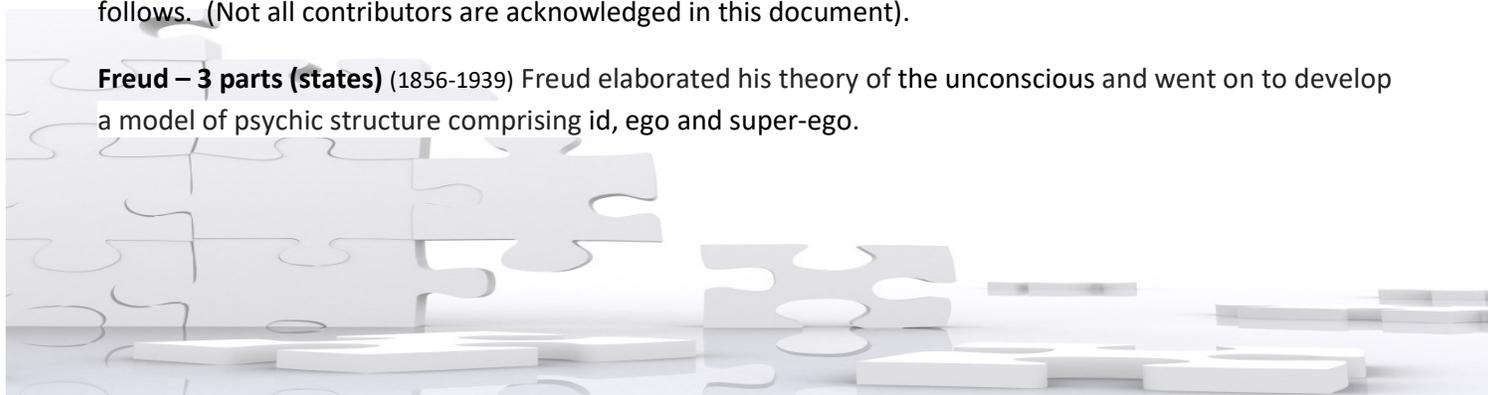
Freud was the first to acknowledge that we were made up of different parts and he made reference to the ego, super ego and the id.

A colleague of his, Paul Federn who wrote the book, "Ego, Psychology and the Psychoses" defied Freud's work stating that there was much more to the human psychic than just three parts. Federn believe that the human psychic was made of many different parts.

It is from the work of Federn and many others working in the field of ego state personality theory that my mapping tool has evolved.

Others recognised for pursuing this line of work, and recognised for many varying contributions are as follows. (Not all contributors are acknowledged in this document).

Freud – 3 parts (states) (1856-1939) Freud elaborated his theory of the unconscious and went on to develop a model of psychic structure comprising id, ego and super-ego.



Federn – many parts (1871-1950) In the late 1920s, Federn published important books such as "*Some Variations in Ego-Feeling*" and "*Narcissism in the Structure of the Ego*". In his works he elucidated upon the concepts of "ego states", "ego limits", "ego cathexis" and the median nature of narcissism. Although an ardent supporter of Freud's teachings, Federn's concept of the ego as experience coinciding with "ego feeling" was inconsistent with Freud's structural approach. Out of loyalty to his mentor, Federn had a tendency to downplay his own theories, even though the conclusions he reached were far different from Freud's.

Jung – compartmentalised (1875-1961) Among the central concepts of analytical psychology is individuation—the lifelong psychological process of differentiation of the self out of each individual's conscious and unconscious elements. Jung considered it to be the main task of human development. He created some of the best known psychological concepts, including synchronicity, archetypal phenomena, the collective unconscious, the psychological complex, and extraversion and introversion.

Berne – Transactional Analysis TA (1910-1970) Perhaps Freud's greatest contribution (and the one that influenced Berne) was the fact that the human personality is *multi-faceted*. Regardless of the classification or name given to a particular area of personality (id, superego, etc.), each individual possesses factions that frequently collide with each other.

Watkins – John and Helen for the development of ego state therapy

Sky – developed the ESI Mapping tool (2009) and her book *The Many Parts of You* (2012)

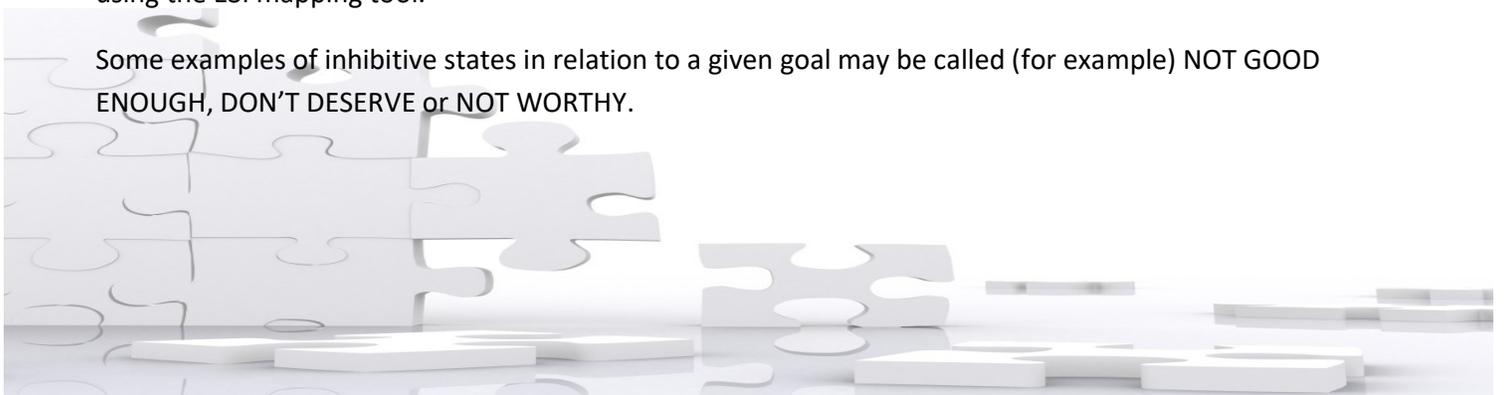
From a collection of works, the theory of ego state personality theory was born. From my perspective, Ego state theory implies that ego states are embedded in the social structure of the brain; the neural pathways. They contain behaviour, dialogue and attitude relevant to understanding a client's social behaviour. Identification of these ego states is central to reshaping and reframing individual behaviour, increasing resilience and quality of life competence.

By developing a map of a client's social landscape in relation to a goal, can greatly assist you to raise awareness and assist with the activation of change. The map is called an ESI map and in relation to the name, ESI means Executive State Identification. This is based on the understanding that only one state is executive at any given time, although may be supported by other states. States that are identified in relation to a goal are referred to as either *supportive* or *inhibitive*. An inhibitive state could change to supportive and visa versa in relation to another goal.

States are formed at a time when they were most needed. For example: a state of 'protection' may have been formed at a time in a child's life when the child sought protection from two arguing parents by running and hiding from them and their shouting.

My book 'The Many Parts of You' discusses the mapping tool process and describes a series of case studies using the ESI mapping tool.

Some examples of inhibitive states in relation to a given goal may be called (for example) NOT GOOD ENOUGH, DON'T DESERVE or NOT WORTHY.



Examples of supportive states in relation to a given goal may be CONFIDENT, YES I CAN or DECISION MAKER. The client themselves will name their states, not the therapist.

Naming the states alone is not sufficient. As the treating practitioner and for the client, it's important to profile these states. By profiling I am introducing an understanding of each one of the states and writing down the thoughts, behaviours and dialogue associated with this state, as described by the client.

The map alone is often sufficient to realise a need for change, yet not always. Once the map has been developed with my client, I then generate a plan of action that they can begin to work with over the next few days, weeks and this plan can be added to, depending on the reason for the client interaction. The client is aware and with this awareness comes a degree of control, and a sense of empowerment. I have found that client awareness generates a greater sense of necessity for change and brings about change more quickly.

If I can leave you with one message – *“You’re probably smarter than you think you are and when you have a greater understanding of your own personal states, you’ll be in a better position to achieve the success you desire.”*



ESI International Pty Ltd

Head Office: Gold Coast, Qld Australia

Local: 1300 787 694 International: +61 409 869 664