

# Dealing with Conflict in the Workplace

# Fact

**“Poorly managed conflict is crippling British business”**

*6 October 2008*

- The average UK employee spends over two hours a week dealing with conflict, which means in total more than 370 million working days were lost last year at a cost to British employers of more than £24 billion.

*Statistics from the global report Fight, flight or face it jointly authored by business psychology firm OPP and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). It surveyed thousands of employees in nine countries across three continents, in businesses of all sizes and in all sectors. A second survey revealed the opinions of 660 HR professionals in the UK, allowing for a balanced employee/employer view on conflict.*

# Conflict is GREAT!

# Content

- Conflict definition and behaviour
- The Science of conflict
- Transactional analysis
- Measuring you

# Conflict Defined

**conflict** /'konflikt/ *n.*

**1** a state of opposition or hostilities; **2** a clashing of opposed principles etc; **3** *Psychol* the opposition of incompatible wishes or needs in a person;

**conflict at work** **1** any workplace disagreement that disrupts the flow of work

\* Definition from global research report by OPP® in association with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

## The Science of Conflict

### Fight or flight

- We are hardwired to respond

### Mirror Neurons

- We use our body to communicate our intentions and our feelings. Mirror neurons are the only brain cells deemed to be specialised to code the actions of other people and also our own actions.
- Essential brain cells for social interactions
- You smile, I smile

### Emotional intelligence

- is the ability to identify, assess, and control the emotions of oneself, of others, and of groups
- Listen, empathise and motivation to learn

# Types of Behaviour

- Aggressive = Offensive; disposed to attack; forceful
- Passive = Offering no opposition; submissive
- Assertive = Insistence upon one's rights; seen as a positive

*The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 5th Edition 1972*

# Transactional Analysis

(States and Concepts of life)

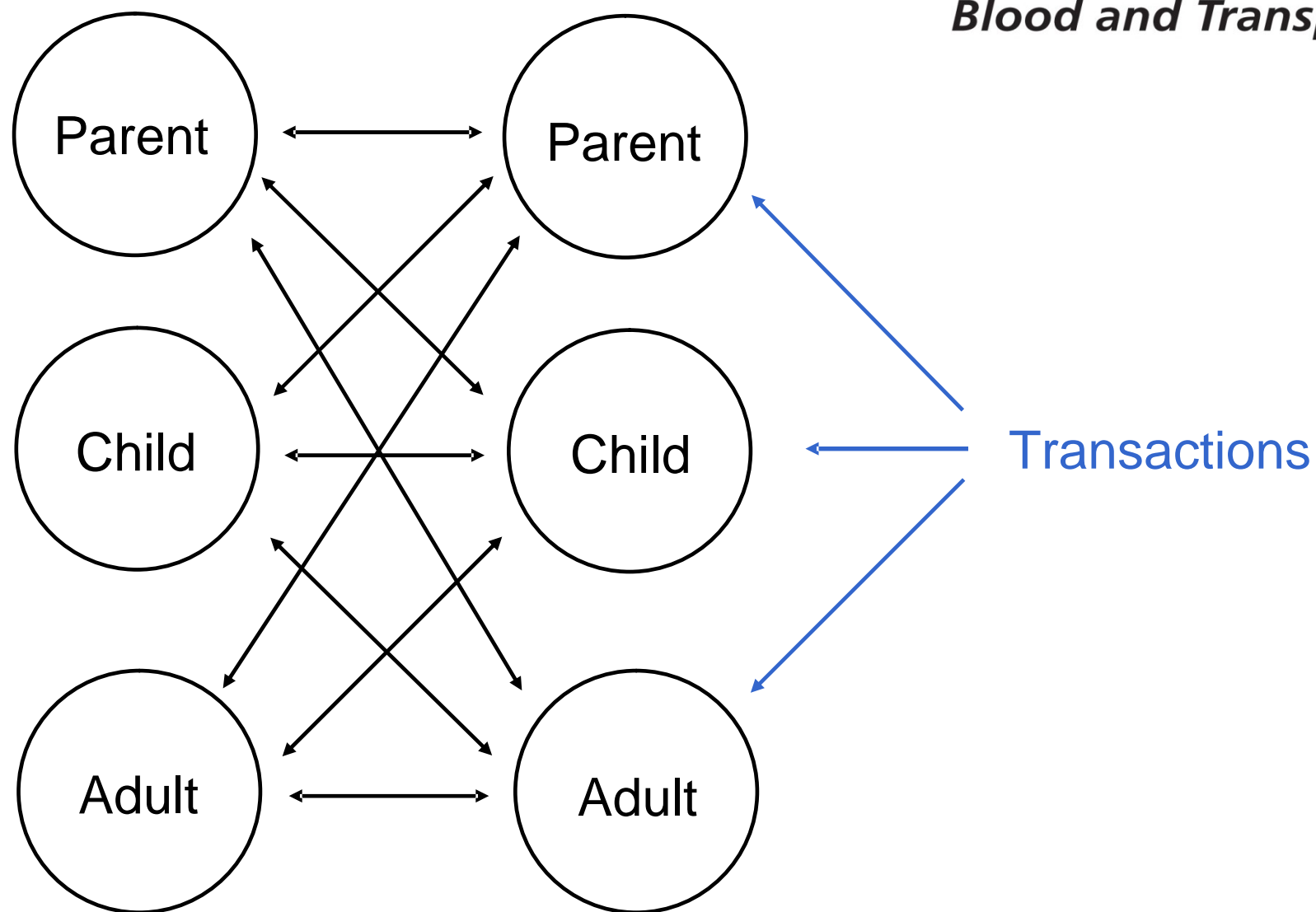
- **Parent State:** Nurturing & Critical
- **Child State:** Emotional & Impulsive
- **Adult State:** Rational & Logical

*\*Eric Berne (1964) Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationships*



# Understanding Transactions

- Every individual has all 3 states
- The states originate stimulus and response (called **TRANSACTIONS**)
- Transactions can be
  - Complementary (expected response)
  - Crossed (unexpected response)
  - Ulterior (Hidden Agenda)



# Conflict Style Inventories

A written tool for gaining insight into how people respond to conflict

- Help people reflect on and improve their responses to conflict
- Improve awareness of styles which help people recognise that they have choices in how to respond to conflict
- Enable understanding that each style has a preferred way of interacting with others in conflict
- It highlights that style awareness can also greatly assist people in meeting the needs of those they work with

*\*Based on Jay Hall's Conflict Management Strategy: A Survey of One's Characteristic Reaction to and Handling of Conflict Between Himself and Others (The Woodlands, Texas: Telemetrics International 1969)*

# To Conclude

- Choose your attitude, this influence your colleagues behaviour
- Be assertive not aggressive
- Identify areas for person development
- Take responsibility for your behaviour
- Don't be seduced by the competitor

Any Questions?