STROKES

This is a pack of stroke handouts that I have written, adapting both original source material and my own experience. Strokes are a useful concept from Transactional Analysis. Strokes motivate people and are the bedrock of productive relationships.

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Richard Maun

Managing Director

Primary People Ltd

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STROKES

UNITS OF RECOGNITION

1. MEETING OUR NEEDS

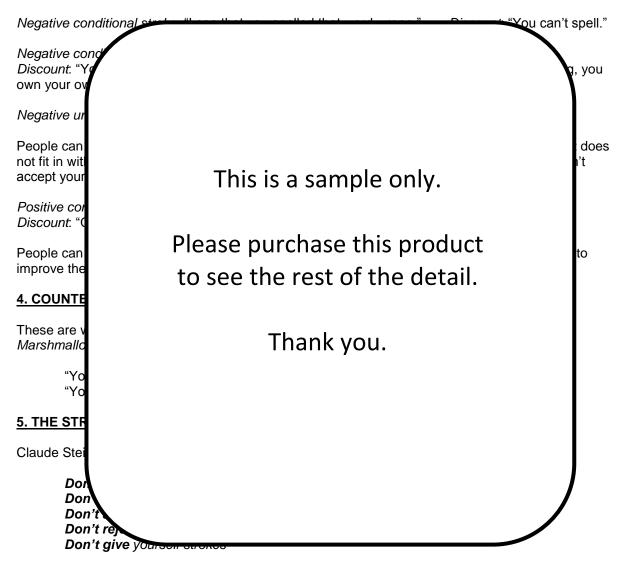
All human beings have a range of basic needs and Eric Berne suggested an essential need is that of *recognition*. If we do not acknowledge someone, for example if we send them 'to Coventry' this is one of the harshest ways we can deal with them. In order to survive and develop, people need to have this 'hunger' for recognition satisfied. Another key need is that of *stimulus*. This can trace its roots back to our distant ancestors, who would have groomed each other. The word 'stroke' is derived from the fact that the earliest form of recognition we receive is that of touch.

So a 'stroke' is a form of stimulus that recognises our existence. We give and receive strokes daily and these are part of our interactions with our self and with others.



3. STROKES vs DISCOUNTS

A straight *negative stroke* needs to be differentiated from a *discount*. A *discount* always contains some distortion of reality. It distorts who you are or what you do and is not a true reflection of reality. A discount minimises, belittles or ignores. You discount someone when you ignore their presence.



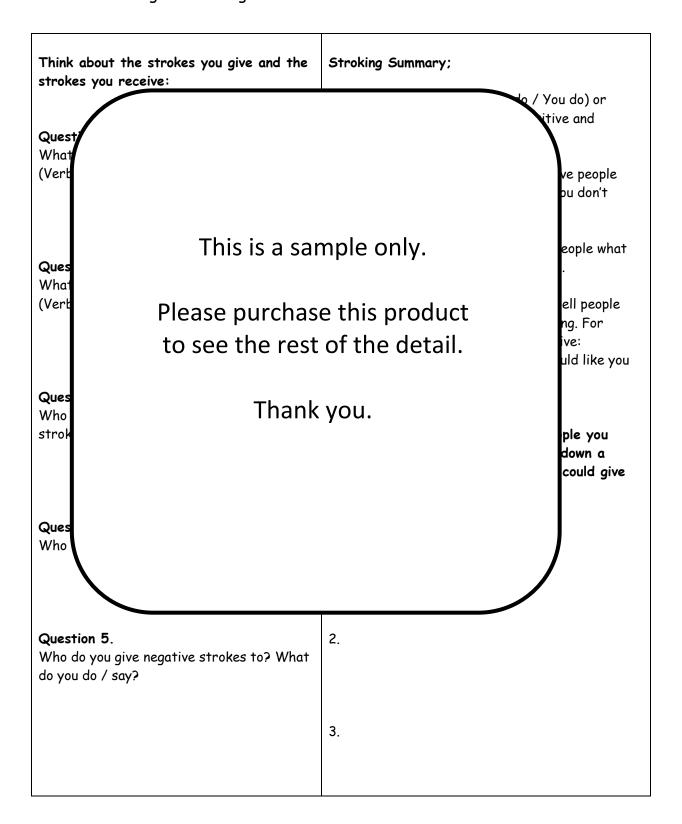
Steiner believes parents do this as a way of controlling children. Strokes are limitless, but by limiting them, children learn to perform in ways which will get them strokes. As adults we still continue to live by these rules and live in a state of constant stroke deprivation. However, we can reject this 'basic training'. Most of us restrict our stroke exchange in accordance with our childhood decisions. These decisions were made as a result of the pressure we experienced from our parents. As grown-ups we can reassess these decisions and change them if we want to.

6. STROKE BANK

We can 'store' strokes form others or ourselves. Later, we can replay these strokes and use them as self-strokes. However, they may lose their potency over time and so we need to top up our bank with new strokes.

Take away message: You get what you stroke.

Exercise: Giving & Receiving Strokes



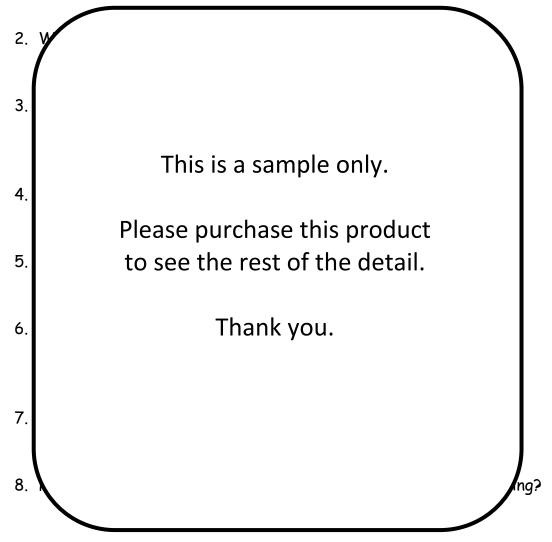
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RECOGNITION PATTERNS

PERMISSIONS & STROKES

Think about yourself and your organisation.

1. Does everyone know you are there?



9. What shift would you like to make?

Change stroke patterns and change culture...