

Instructions for Putting the Mode Map on Chairs working with Critic Modes by accessing the “backstage level”

Eckhard Roediger (modified from “Contextual Schema therapy” published by New Harbinger)

1. Put the Inner Critic mode voices on a separate chair: Label Inner Critic mode messages by asking: *“Sounds as if there are some critic voices involved here. Let’s talk with them directly”*. Offer the client an additional chair on the “backstage level” and ask them to take a seat on that Inner Critic mode chair, sit beside him or her, and let the modes speak out their beliefs and appraisals to an empty Child mode chair in front of the client. For the chair positions in this first part see figure 1 below. *“Ok, now we are sitting here looking at this [client’s first name] over there. What do you think about him or her? What do other people think?”* You can play the devil’s advocate to increase the client’s involvement: *“Well, who needs somebody like that? Will that ever change? Who will miss him or her when she would not be around?”* When the clients talks in first-person language, turn the message into second-person language. E.g., turn “I am a failure” to “You are a failure”.

2. Both client and therapist change to the Child mode side: *Close your eyes, please. How do you feel, hearing these voices and their messages? How do you feel in your body—your chest, your belly?* [Eventually, offer the four negative basic emotions of fear, sadness, anger, and feeling annoyed for the client to choose from. Sort out social emotions and coping attempts on the coping mode chair on the front stage level.] *Are any children born with guilt feelings? This isn’t your Child mode answering with a basic emotion. This is your self-defeating coping mode, sitting on the chair on the front stage. I want to talk to the innate and innocent Child mode deep inside you. What do you feel, hearing these voices? Is it more fear or sadness, or do you feel annoyed or angry? What do you feel in your body?*

3. Access the needs and wishes of the Child modes: [Eventually, offer two chairs.] *What does the Vulnerable Child mode need, and what does the Angry Child mode want to do?*

4. **Both client and therapist stand up to “float” above the chairs:** *How do you feel coming up in your body, watching the Inner Critic modes beating up the child?* [If constructive anger is not sufficiently activated, use the extension or substitution technique, act as a role model, or ask for interfering Inner Critic mode voices and then sort them out on the Inner Critic chair below you.]

5. **Impeach the Inner Critic mode voices:** *Based on what you feel now in your body, and your new insights, what do you want to say to the Inner Critic modes?* [Focus more on the negative effects of the modes than on the content. Shape the client’s body posture and voice tone.]
How do you feel now? Do you believe you are right? [This is reappraisal.]

6. **Care for the Child modes:** *If you look at the child now in a compassionate way, what do you want to say to or do with the child?* [In case self-compassionate remain blocked ask for interfering Critic mode voices, use substitution technique or give your words as a compassionate therapist.] *How does caring for the child this way make you feel in your body?*

7. **Look for a functional solution:** [Now you can look for a realistic solution to the issue brought to the session. Do this together from a standing position. Try to integrate both Child mode poles into the solution. If necessary, support the client with your ideas.]

8. **Strengthen the Healthy Adult mode:** [Add a Healthy Adult mode chair and sit beside it. If the situation the client brought to therapy involves another person, put this person on the Critic mode chair representing this person. Ask the client to convey his solution to this empty chair. If the situation was an internal conflict, let the client speak up to the Inner Critic mode chair. Shape and model how to act in steps until your client feels confident.]

9. **Check back with the Child modes:** [Ask the Vulnerable Child mode] *How do you feel about what the Healthy Adult said and did? What else do you need from the Healthy Adult?* [Ask the Angry or Impulsive Child mode] *Do you accept the proposed solution, and do you support it? Are you willing to contribute from your end? What could eventually interfere with the plans of Healthy Adult mode? What can we do in order to make you part of the team?*

10. **Discrimination and take-home message:** *How do you feel now compared to the beginning of this exercise? Try to form one sentence as a principle that expresses the essence of your experience.*

Fig. 1: Chair positions when let the Critics talk to the emotional (Child-) Chair

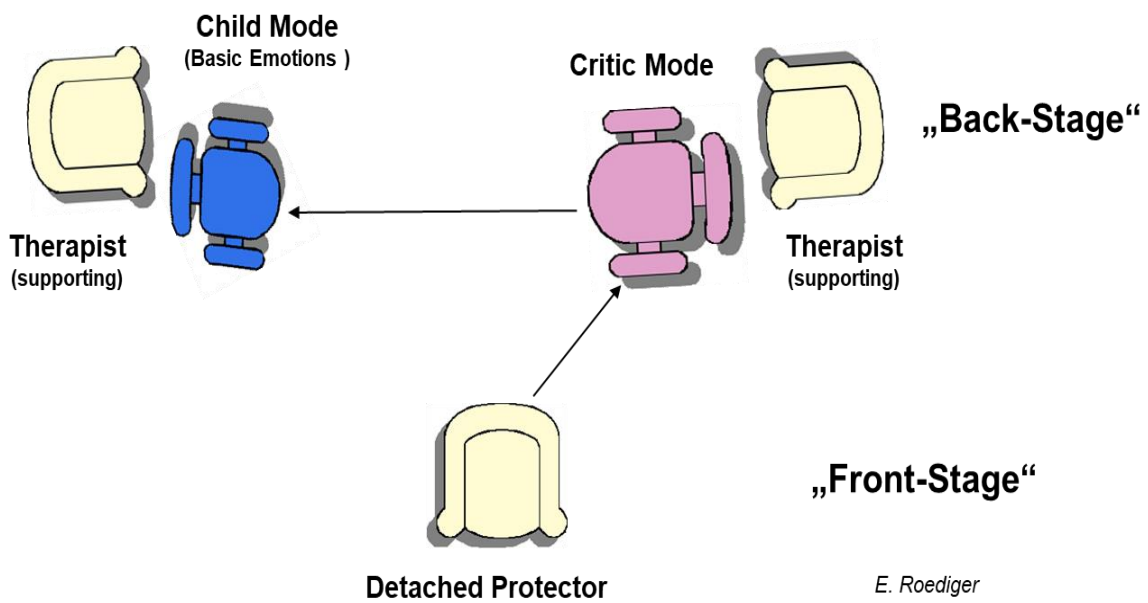
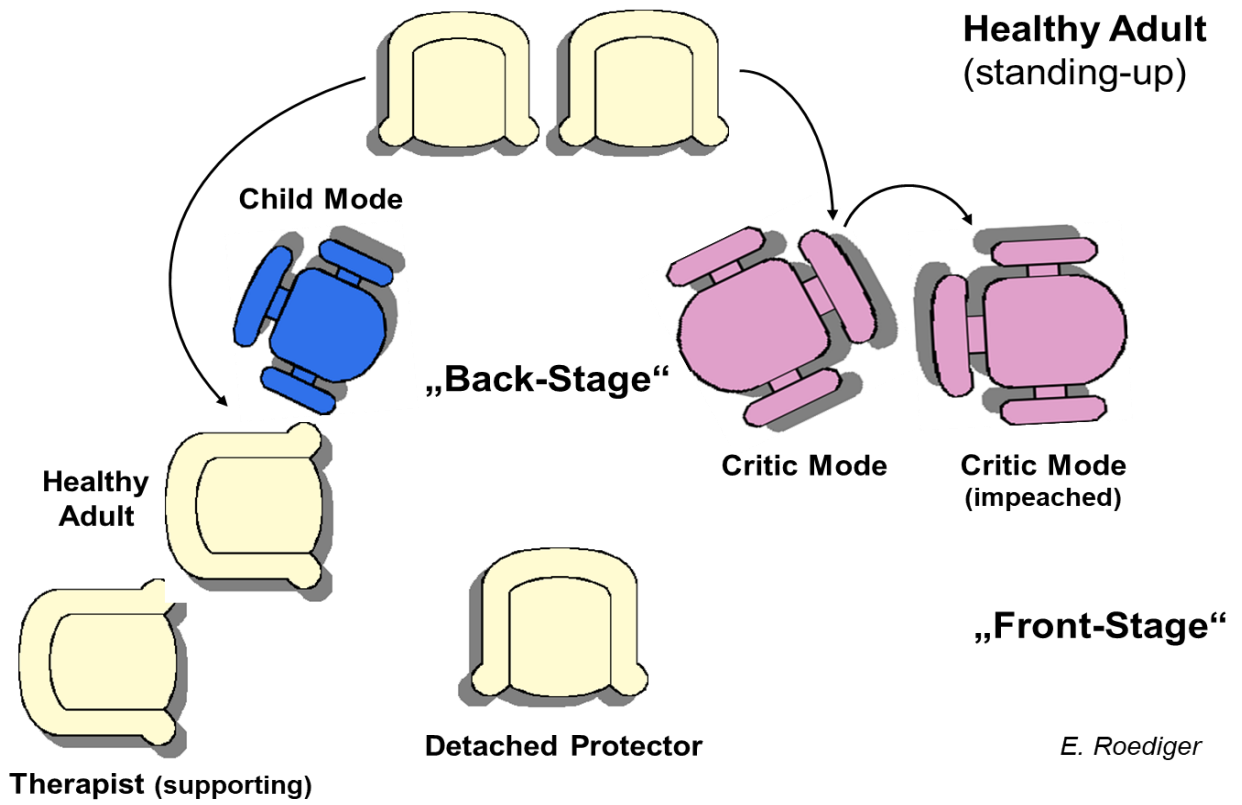


Fig. 2: Chair position when impeaching Critic voices and support emotional (Child-) Side



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