

SAMPLE EGO STATE EXERCISE

Go inside. Notice, as you sit deeply into your chair, that you are an adult. As an adult, you have boundaries. You have professional and other skills. And you have a broad perspective. [You have insight. And you are capable of negotiating complex relationships.] Think of yourself acting competently with clients, paying bills, voting, and behaving as an adult in your relationships. [Connect with the part of your identity that feels most competent and capable.]

Now go deeper, and as that competent adult, find that small child inside of you. Notice how that child holds your curiosity, your need to elicit love and approval. [Notice any important details about the child and notice any feelings you may have toward that smaller part.]

When you've found that little one inside, look at [that child] and feel [his or her] gaze coming back to you. Let yourself know if this little one deserves to be taken care of: fed, protected, allowed normal sleep, loved, kept around [safe and] loving people and everything else a human needs.

Will you, as an adult, keep this child back from situations [that require your adult self]? [Will you protect him or her from adult matters?]

Now, I want you to imagine walking through a normal day attending to adult things, while taking care of and protecting this child. Make sure this child is fed, hydrated, well slept, and entertained. [Check in with the child to see if they have any additional needs that require your attention? Communicate to that child that you are an adult, in charge, and capable of keeping him or her safe. Provide any reassurance or resources the child may need.]

Make sure that your adult self keeps this child out of situations that call for adult behavior. Walk through letting your adult decide what your boundaries will be with your work, clients, your family, and the needs of all others [that require your attention throughout the day].

When you're ready, I want you to hug that child inside, feel that young heart beating inside your heart and those little lungs breathing with you.

[When you're ready, slowly] come back to the room.