

# The concept of OK-ness.

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According to Berne's school we **have four ways of establishing relationships with others**, where the difference is on how you conceive your «existential position» and the other's «existential position». The distinction is in terms of «OK-ness», which is a *state of mind, not a behaviour*:

<b>Q1</b> I AM OK YOU ARE OK	<b>Q2</b> I AM OK YOU ARE NOT OK
<b>Q3</b> I AM NOT OK YOU ARE OK	<b>Q4</b> I AM NOT OK YOU ARE NOT OK

## 1. I am OK, you are OK

I'm aware of the importance of my person (my existence) and the dignity of my interests. I grant myself the right to fight for them. I recognise and fully use my personal resources and accept my incompleteness and defects .

I also grant the same importance and rights to the other individual I'm in a relationship with. He can also fight for his own interests, although I'll carry on with mine. I accept that he uses his resources as best he can for himself and that he lives with the inevitable «defects» that he has, like every other human being.

The mental state grants the highest flexibility and the highest sensitivity, the ideal status to tackle situation of big risks and big opportunities.

## 2. I'm OK – You are NOT OK

In this attitude of mind I still grant myself the OK-state , but I deny it to the other person

The problem of this state is that the other, the others are discounted, are under valued and who lives this mental position is not able to realise that the other part could be his a dangerous enemy or a precious allied partner.

It is a temporary blindness and deafness, where a person can allow himself any behaviour, with no limits, a maximum flexibility but a nearly null sensitivity.

### **3. I'm NOT OK, You are OK**

It is the symmetrical position

This feeling is granting to the other person (which is OK) all what we deny to ourselves: importance, rights, permissions, forgiveness of own defects and acceptance own limits.

This apparent state of weakness in front to any other is an ancient strategy to survive (metaphorically but also physically). Not being a threat for no one, we are granted a basic right to survive, until we remain in this state. The sensitivity is very high, like every child or weak person has, but flexibility remains very poor: the self allowed behaviour are very narrow. The reason is that if one Q1 person performs in a too free way he could succeed, but then he would become a threat (a Q1 state).

### **4. I'm NOT OK- you are NOT OK**

This is generally associated with a feeling of this kind: «nothing is worth being done by nobody»

These four psychological positions are all temporary. We have some control on them, but not total control

We «travel» all the time through these four «existential positions»

What is characteristic of every individual is his strategy to face the high risk-high opportunities event, which could be from any of the four quadrants.

A question: is it possible to control our own quadrant?

Is it possible to control others' quadrants, in order to achieve the most lucid- most capable state (Q1?).

The answer is that a lower level of stress, an ability to take the time we need, counting on support of the professional community help to reach and hold the Q1 state.

As far as the second answer, it could be experienced that holding own state of OK-ness (I'm OK-You are OK) influences the other person to join the same mental state, whether is living Q2 or Q3.

**When facing a multicultural situation, adopt the first attitude: I'm OK, you're OK.**

It will help your alertness and your reaction to the other person's behaviour will be more appropriate. Position number 1 (both individuals are OK) is the most favourable when facing a difficult or unknown situation.