

The Healthy Adult Mode

Here we turn our attention to the Healthy Adult Mode. But before we do, it is important to understand that this particular mode encompasses a number of different parts, that can take on a variety of different behaviours, all guided by a healthy, harmonious, sense of self. When our Healthy Adult Mode is in full swing, we are living in an internal space that is dominated by our Positive Childhood Schema, and we are generally living according to our true core values and beliefs. This is in essence what I mean by “Living the Life I Want to Live.” This state of Wise Mind is balanced, harmonious, and effective. When I am living this way, I am filled with what Internal Family Systems (IFS) calls Self Energy, and I have the ability to Observe and Describe my parts in real time, without any judgement.

When I am in the zone of the Healthy Adult mode, my actions are influenced by useful and adaptive thoughts, and I am able to access the behaviors, and skills I need to function effectively in adult life. This contains the healthy, competent, parts of our personality that have the ability to nurture, validate and affirm the vulnerable child mode; it uses the skills that gives us the ability to set limits for our angry and impulsive child modes; it promotes and supports the happy child mode; it recognizes, and works with our maladaptive coping modes; and it moderates and re-educates our dysfunctional critic modes. The adult in this mode also performs appropriate functions such as working, parenting, acting responsibly, and committing to obligations; pursuing pleasurable adult activities such as intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural interests and hobbies; engages in consensual sex; and maintains well-being routines such as ensuring a healthy diet along with adequate sleep and exercise. This mode is full of Self energy and brings compassion and curiosity to every situation, it generates our ability to Live the Life we Want to Live.

“Recognizing the many different parts of my personality that are involved in my Healthy Adult mode is key to creating the Life I Want to Live. Building on the strengths I already possess requires awareness for their existence in the first place.”

~Steven Morris RP

My Healthy Adult mode is filled with multiple parts of my personality, the many different parts of my system that I didn't pay attention to on a regular basis because their behaviours didn't cause any significant problems in my life. The Healthy Adult mode is the way we access Self energy, it contains the parts of us that know what to say to the child parts of our personality when they are angry, entitled, impulsive, and undisciplined. The Healthy Adult mode calms our system by activating the parts of us that practice mindfulness meditation, teaching our coping parts how to

be healthy versions of themselves, and educating our critics on the appropriate language of motivation rather than deprivation.

For me, my Healthy Adult mode was buried deep within my system, smothered by the parts of my personality that dominated my adult behaviour patterns in an attempt to control my emotional state, and keep my vulnerable child safe from perceived danger. The only way to bring these parts to the forefront of my actions was to recognize, acknowledge and appreciate their existence. The parts of me that want to be a good parent, partner or sibling, the parts of me that know how to work hard, exercise, cook healthy meals, and organize my day, are all important aspects of my Healthy Adult mode. When I ignore their existence, I am ignoring what it means to be me.

When engaging these “healthy” parts of your personality, the parts that engage in effective behaviours, it opens up the possibility of compassionate interactions with every other important part of your entire system. The Self energy we find inside the Healthy Adult mode is always available to you, it sits dormant, hidden by the fear you have created for living your life. Fear of guilt, shame, sadness, and loneliness inhibits your ability to live the Life you Want to Live, and it is only with Self energy that you can provide the space for these fears to be addressed. Our Healthy Adult mode is the way to access our ability to bring compassion and curiosity to our own internal world. The Healthy Adult mode brings unconditional self-acceptance to the parts that feel unheard, misunderstood, and judged and paves the way to the Life you Want to Live.

Next, let’s check in to see how you relate to this Mode in your own behaviours. Answer the questions below based on your personal experiences and the rating scale provided.

Never 0	Sometimes 1	50/50 2	Often 3	Always 4
Description				Score
I can solve problems rationally without letting my emotions overwhelm me, and I able to regulate my behavioural, and emotional reactions to fit the situation.				
I have a good sense of who I am and what I need to make myself happy, I don’t put myself down, and I able recognize situations for what they are.				

Based on the scores you gave for the questions above, and the way you relate to the description provided on the previous pages, how Relevant is the Healthy Adult Mode to you in your life? Add the two scores together to calculate your prevalence score. On a scale of 0 – 8, 0 being not present at all, and 8 being present in my life every day, rate your experience of the Healthy Adult Mode.

My Healthy Adult Mode has a prevalence score of ___/8.

On the next page, take the time to explore your experience of the Healthy Adult Mode, see if you can identify how you feel when this Mode is active, how you are thinking when this Mode is active, what you do when this Mode is active, and what situations you might need to be aware of that can activate this way of thinking in your personality system.

- a. When I am in the Healthy Adult Mode, I experience the following feelings (List the emotions you experience in the Healthy Adult Mode, focus on the feelings in your system when you are living according to your true core values and beliefs, Living the Life you Want to Live).

- b. When I am in the Healthy Adult Mode, I am having the following thoughts (List the thoughts you are having when you're in the Healthy Adult Mode, be specific, focus on thoughts in your system when you feel connected with your values and beliefs, when you are Living the Life you Want to Live, and you are feeling a sense of internal safety).

- c. List the Positive Schema you would like to be connected with to achieve this sense of balance and internal safety (List the Positive Schema you connect with, notice which of these healthy stories resonates with you, sit with your Wise Mind and see what comes forth when you allow yourself to explore these healthy stories).

- d. Make a list of the "Domains of life" that it is important for your positive schemas to be dominant for you. (Focus on the domains you are concentrating on at this point in time, choose the areas that are most meaningful for you to develop in the Life you Want to Live).

e. Make a list that contains your Hierarchy of Core Values in these domains, in order of most to least important. One being the most important, and five being the least important.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

f. When I am in the Healthy Adult Mode, and my positive Schema are guiding me to Live the Life I want to Live, I need to behave in the following ways to manifest these values in my life (List the things you do, the way you act, and how you react when these positive Schema are dominant in your personality system).

g. When I am in the Healthy Adult Mode, and my positive Schema are guiding me to Live the Life I want to Live, I need to see the following behaviours from people around me to support me with this (List the behaviours you need to see from others that are respectful of your boundaries, and help you Live the Life you Want to Live).

h. The following is a list of people that support me and help me develop my Healthy Adult Mode (List the people you are aware of that help promote the activation of you Healthy Adult Mode of behaviour in the past).
