

Ego Stroke Sorting - Chart Instructions

Goal of this section: Practice shifting from a state of Ego High (that leads to Counterproductive behaviors) in order to regain a sense of gratefulness and connection and access your clearest and most creative thinking.

An Ego Stroke is a moment of Ego inflation – whether you have felt strong, admired, superior, perfect, invulnerable, vindicated, righteous...

A. Flash Ego Stroke Sorting (for a fleeting moment of small high)

- Ego Driver/ Candies -- What Desired Images, Unconscious goal, or any other impulse to prove, win, be superior were activated?
- Costs -- What am I afraid of (losing)? How am I likely to react counterproductively if I stay with my Stroke? What are the costs to me, others and the context? How will we (as a team, family, community, etc.) feel more isolated, in competition, on a treadmill?
- Reframe/Rebalance -- What am I grateful for? → How were other people instrumental? Are there other factors that contributed to this result (luck, privilege,...)? How did I show up that I want to reinforce? What contribution did I/we do and want to do again?
- ATS goals -- What do I care more about than my Ego High (Remember your Go-To Purposes, i.e., creating a certain *context*, collaboration toward some *contribution*, leaning into *learning*, etc.)?
- Next Steps -- Are there other people I want to express my gratitude to? And celebrate with?

B. Express Ego Stroke Sorting (for a moment of significant high)

Costs 4				
A. Activating Stimulus 1	-1. Ego Drivers / candy 2	-2. Reframe 5	-3. Purpose / ATS Goal 6	-4. Potential Actions 7
Δ Delta between A & -1 3				

***Note:** Fill out the chart by following the numbers highlighted in grey (start with 1 and end with 7).

Use a blank chart (you can [download one here](#)). Or, if you don't have access to an Express Pinch chart, you can just turn a blank piece of paper horizontally (landscape) and create 5 columns.

You will find detailed chart instructions below. They may feel daunting at first, but do not fear! Instead of sharing general guidelines, we've broken the process down into the smallest possible increments in order to avoid confusion and save time! If you practice this a few times, it will dramatically reduce the time it takes you to unpack a pinch.

Express Pinch Stroke Sorting Detailed Instructions

- List moments of (ego) inflation – whether you have felt strong, admired, superior, perfect, invulnerable, vindicated, righteous... Choose one to work on.
- Box A • Activating Stimulus -- Fill in the observable details of your Pinch-Stroke
 - Confirm that you are only addressing one stimulus at a time
 - Underline the very specific word, gesture, etc. that was a trigger for your pinch
 - Do a *Camera Check*: Do you notice any beliefs, inferences, assumptions, thoughts or mind chatter that remain in Box A and should be moved to Box B?
- Box -1 • Ego Drivers / Candy
 - List your Ego Drivers that were likely activated in this moment. In particular, what Ego Candy – familiar impulse to prove, win, be superior? What desired images feel energized? How is your unconscious goal getting wind in its sails? (Refer to your ID Card)
 - *Ask yourself: “Isn’t this just my familiar drive to recreate this sensation of safety and power or to shield myself from a pain? Do I really want to continue to create the costs I do not want?”*
 - *Then ask yourself: “Noticing this, am I already feeling less a sense of “ego high” and more a sense of evenness and gratitude?”*
- Box Δ • Delta -- If you take out the subtext that your ego is adding, how is your Ego Driver (Box -1) different from your Activating Event (Box A)? Be very literal in this step.
 - If you connected this pinch to a Significant Event from your childhood, how is this situation different?
- Gray Box • Costs and Ripple Effects -- capture the costs to you, to others and to the context that have already occurred or may occur going forward;
 - Am I or will I be feeling more anxious? Specify which fears, e.g., to lose the look alike of love and inclusion that I get from recognition, to lose the ‘high’ of feeling strong and superior, to not “living up” to my hype and be found out as a fraud, etc.
 - How am I likely to show up if I stay on this high? How will I be even more invested in protecting my images at all cost instead of taking risk and engaging authentically?
 - Am I or will I be feeling more isolated/distant from others, exhausted/on a treadmill?
 - How might others feel more disconnected, unrecognized or in competition with me? (impact on others and the context)

Ego Stroke Sorting - Chart Instructions



- Box -2 • Reframe -- If I'm not projecting this Ego Driver, how else could I read and experience this situation? How can I *reframe* it?
 - How may I be building this moment up? How may I be building myself up and others down?
 - How were other people instrumental in my perceived success (name specific way they contributed)? What feelings of gratitude can I connect to?
 - Are there other factors that contributed to this result (luck, privilege,...)? Does this remind me (or show me) of other things that I can be grateful for?
 - Is this the result of me working toward this moment and leaning into a learning edge? Is this a moment to be grateful for my natural ability and/or my efforts to make a contribution? Vs. a stroke of my genius and superiority

- Check-in with yourself: *"Noticing this, am I already feeling less a sense of "ego high" and more a sense of evenness and gratitude?"*

- Box -3 • My Purpose -- What ATS goals can help you feel recentered, bring you back to a balanced reality and be in the present moment? What ATS goals are stronger than your Ego Drivers specifically in this situation? Think about Context, Contribution and Learning goals.

- Check-in with yourself: *"Noticing this, am I already feeling less a sense of "ego high" and more a sense of evenness and gratitude?"*

- Box -4 • Next Steps -- having reconnected to a sense of creativity and curiosity, brainstorm some different responses (some of them might be similar to C2 but from a different space).
 - Think back to the moment of the pinch
 - Think about now. Is there anything I can do to clean up, if relevant?

Specifically

- Are there some of the things I've done / skills I've used that I want to acknowledge and remember that I can use again in the future?
- Are there other people I want to express my gratitude to? And celebrate with?