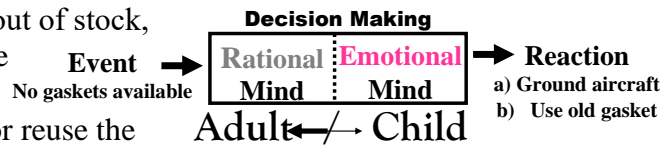




For those who may be just joining us with this issue, we are on **Part 3 Final of the Adult/Child** model. This model relates the conscious mind to the Adult while our subconscious is referred to as the Child. If you take a few moments to review the last two issues you will see how it does very often, act like a spoiled child out to get its way. Let's see how it interacts with the final six Dirty Dozen and discuss how we can use the knowledge of its decision making influence to help avoid making a human error.

**Lack of Resources Article #20** (DOM – Jan/Feb 2017) Anyone who has been in aviation for awhile has experienced a situation where a needed part or material is not readily available. Let's say it is a gasket that is out of stock, and on backorder for a delivery sometime next week. Your dilemma is do I ground the aircraft until the part arrives or reuse the old gasket?



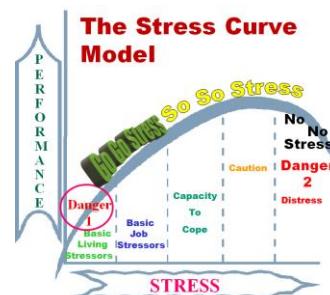
You might think it would be an easy decision, but it may depend on which part of the mind has the most influence, as well as other mitigating circumstances such as no new gaskets for at least a week or the aircraft is required for a medi-vac of a critically ill child, etc. The Adult knows what should be done, but the Child wants to make an emotional decision. These “battles” go on for every event without us giving a thought to the subconscious influence.

**Pressure #22** (DOM – March 2017) There is no shortage of pressure in aviation. In my years of working, there would be brief periods of nothing to do (sweep the hangar floor time) followed by a mad rush as the aircraft is required in x hours for an important flight and there is only y hours of time to do the work. Of course it has to be done right but, y always seemed to be a smaller number than x. The Child (like most children) wants to do it right, but if the pressure becomes too great it can revert to an emotional “don't care” attitude just to get it done on time.

The above can easily become a norm (group habit) especially if it gets rewarded with “atta boys” for doing what was needed (short cuts) to get the aircraft out on time. Remember to use Mom's advice (Stop, Look, Listen and Act) when making the decision. If you forgot the advice, go back and read the Pressure article in the March 2017 magazine.

**Lack of Assertiveness #5** (DOM - April 2015) is failure to act in a bold and confident manner on Safety concerns. The Adult knows what should be said or done, but the Child (perhaps due to Early Life Decisions and the emotion of being shy) fails to act. Mom's advice of Stop, Look, Listen and the all important Act could have saved a lot of lives in the past as well as the future. It often will take assertiveness to get the Safety message across, but it is part of your job as a professional.

**Stress #21** (DOM – April 2017) is the subconscious response to the demands placed upon it. Replace the word subconscious with the Child and we see that the Child plays



a major role in our stress. If you recall our Stress Model, it had two danger zones. The first one is low stress with low productivity and is the realm of Complacency. Here the Child is doing most of the work and will do and see what it is in the habit of doing and seeing. The number two danger zone is the area where the stress has become so great that the Adult becomes overwhelmed and productivity drops off dramatically as the Child makes emotional decisions. PTSD is the Child who never forgets and relives a highly emotional negative experience over and over. The Adult may rationalize that the event is over and can not be changed, but the Child refuses to “let it go.” This is stress at its worst. The Child will determine the level of stress you will experience

**Lack of Awareness #23** (DOM – May 2017) is a lack of alertness and vigilance in observing. The Child plays some role in this as it tends to not notice anything out of the ordinary. It depends on habit as part of its decision making. Thus, it is the Adult that has to rationalize when something is not quite right even as the Child provides the feeling.

**Norms #8** (DOM – July 2015) is short for normal or the way we actually do things around here. Norms can be seen as a group habit that the majority of a group or even organization have. They are often negative, but can be positive or neutral. As we have established, the Child makes decisions based on habit, emotions and ELDs (Early Life Decisions). One other characteristic our (below the conscious level) Child has is it does not like change. This is exactly like young children who want you to read the same story book every night. Thus, the Child likes norms, good or otherwise and dislikes change, good or bad.

I wish I could have used this model to explain to a family why the father/husband pilot tried the impossible and died. If you go back to #26 (DOM August 2017) accident #2, you can read the fine details, but in simple terms a very experienced pilot tried to turn back to the airport he had just taken off from. The turn back was just over the end of the runway at about 150 ft of altitude. The aircraft stalled in the turn and he went straight into the ground at a 90 degree angle. It is impossible to make a 180 degree plus turn with no engine power with only 150 ft of altitude. So what was he thinking as he spoke his last words to the tower? They were: “I’m not going to make i...” Using our model, who made the split second decision to return to the runway? It has to be the Child with the emotion of fear that wanted to go back where he would be Safe. The Adult realized, too late, that it couldn’t be done and told the tower what it realized. The final report had to say that the pilot was not mentally prepared for the sudden emergency. I am quite sure had the emergency occurred in a Boeing 727 (that he flew for an airline) the Child would have done what it was in the habit of doing in numerous simulator sessions and maintained airspeed as they landed straight ahead in open fields. I believe that the purpose of recurrent simulator training is to train the Child as the Adult, after 1,000s of hours of flying, knows what to do, but the Child will be the first to react and it will base its decision on emotion, ELDs and habit, not rational thinking.

So, who is stronger? The Adult or the Child? The Child has the power to kill or to cure. PTSD, if untreated, will all too often, find a healthy person with a bright future committing suicide as the only answer to the problem. Another example is the anorexic person who is starving themselves to death in order for things to somehow be right. You can rationalize with them that they must eat or they will die, but the Child has greater control and even with counseling less than 50% recover and approximately 20% die.

However, the Child can cure as well. I had a friend with terminal liver cancer who was doing very well buying wrecked aircraft and selling recertified parts off of them. Dying, he sold the business and as a last chance he went to the Philippines where a doctor removed the cancer with his bare hands as my friend watched. He returned cancer free and lived another 35 plus years. Who had to believe what I believe were bloody chicken guts and not his cancer? Only the Child does, so it certainly wouldn't work for me.

What can you do to make the best decision possible? The answer is very simple. Take that minute for Safety. Think with the rational Adult mind. Who is making this decision and is it the right one? The Child has qualities such as ingenuity, creativity and intuition that can save the day, but be sure that the rational mind is making that final decision when all options have been explored. Never let the Child make an emotional decision without looking at the possible rational outcomes. The Child has way more negative emotions to work with than positive and emotions like anger, rage and frustration, to name just a few. Seldom do these have a positive outcome. They say that 70% of domestic murders are the result of jealousy, which makes it a very dangerous emotion to allow to control your decision.

I hope that this model gives you food for thought as it has me when I am able to realize that my Child is taking control of what I am doing and my Adult mind can stop it before I do something that I'll later regret. Get in the habit of talking to your Child. It can be persuaded to listen.

Take just that moment to know who is making the decision and I promise you will be a Safer and likely happier person for it. It works for me.