



TEG-BLUE™
THE EMOTIONAL
GRADIENT BLUEPRINT

Emotional Technology for Healing and Repair

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How All These Frameworks Power TEG-Blue™

TEG-Blue connects existing models, frameworks and theories.

Each one of them — Plutchik's Wheel, NVC, CBT, Polyvagal Theory, Zones of Regulation, IFS, Freud, Jung, Winnicott, Rogers, and more — has given us valuable ways to understand emotions. But each one also leaves spaces.

TEG-Blue weaves these models together into a single visual map. It **connects what happens inside each model** with what happens *between them*, and adds the missing layers that **trauma and abuse survivors** know are real — like the role of distorted emotions under survival, and the reality of malicious intent.

TEG-Blue acts as connective tissue — bridging across psychology, education, and **trauma-informed practice** to give us one integrative, neurodivergent-friendly system for understanding emotions, harm, and repair.

1. Wheel of Emotions — developed by Robert Plutchik

Consists on:

- The model describes **8 primary emotions** (joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust, anger, anticipation).
- These emotions can **combine** to form more complex feelings (e.g., anticipation + joy = optimism).
- It's often used visually, like a flower or color wheel, to show how emotions relate and intensify.

Strengths:

- Clear **visual map** of primary emotions.
- Shows **intensity and blending** (complex feelings built from simple ones).
- Useful for teaching emotional vocabulary.

What it misses:

- Doesn't explain **why an emotion "shows up" distorted** (e.g., anger as boundary vs anger as control)
- Ignores **context** — the same emotion can mean very different things depending on whether you're in Belonging or Defense mode.
- No pathway for **healing** or relational repair.
- Treats emotions as **fixed, narrow buckets** (joy, fear, sadness...), without showing the **gradients inside each one**.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Explains the **systemic role** of emotions (Connect vs Protect vs Control vs Oppression).
- Maps how emotions are **interpreted differently** inside the emotional gradient between Connect vs Protect.
- Includes **trauma-informed gradients** (hurt, neglect, abuse, malicious intent).
- Offers **tools for repair**, not just classification.

2. NVC — Nonviolent Communication, developed by Marshall Rosenberg.

Consists on:

- It's both a **communication method** and a way of relating based on empathy.
- The core steps are:
 1. **Observation** (what happened, without judgment)
 2. **Feeling** (how you feel about it)
 3. **Need** (what need of yours is connected)
 4. **Request** (a clear, doable action you ask for)
- Example: Instead of "You never listen to me!", NVC encourages: "When I see you looking at your phone while I talk (observation), I feel sad (feeling), because I need connection (need).

Would you be willing to put it down for a minute? (request)."

Strengths:

- Provides a **language structure** (observation, feeling, need, request).
- Promotes **empathy** and reduces blame.
- Can transform conflict when used with goodwill.

What it misses:

- Assumes people are **emotionally safe enough** to use it (not always true in abuse).
- Can be **weaponized** by manipulators (e.g., fake empathy to control).
- Doesn't explain **why emotions distort** under survival mode.
- Lacks a **map of patterns** — it gives tools, but not the bigger system.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Shows **why NVC fails** in unsafe dynamics (e.g., manipulation, control, oppression).
- Adds **emotional gradients** to measure harm and distinguish discomfort vs real damage.
- Places NVC inside a **wider framework** of survival/belonging — explaining when it works and when it breaks.
- Provides **visual tools** that make feelings and patterns visible (helpful for neurodivergent users).

3. CBT — Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Consists on:

- A widely used form of psychotherapy.
- Focuses on how **thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are connected**.
- The idea: if you change distorted thinking patterns, you can reduce painful emotions and change unhelpful behaviors.
- Often very **structured and practical** (worksheets, exercises, homework).
- Example: If you think "I always fail," CBT would help you examine evidence, challenge the thought, and replace it with something more accurate like "Sometimes I struggle, but I've succeeded before."

Strengths:

- Practical, structured, **evidence-based**.
- Helps challenge **distorted thoughts**.
- Good for anxiety, depression, phobias.

What it misses:

- Over-focuses on **thoughts**, sometimes minimizing the **body and nervous system**.

- Can feel **mechanical** or invalidating if deeper trauma is present.
- Doesn't address **power, relational abuse, or systemic harm**.
- Healing is treated as an **individual task**, not relational or generational.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Integrates **body, nervous system, and somatic patterns** (not just thoughts).
- Places emotions in a **relational + systemic context**, not just inside the individual.
- Brings in **trauma-informed gradients** that show the difference between hurt, survival responses, and deliberate abuse.
- Connects **personal healing** with **social repair** (families, institutions, culture).

4. Polyvagal Theory — developed by Stephen Porges

Consists on:

- A model of the **autonomic nervous system** (ANS).
- Describes how our body shifts between:
 - **Ventral vagal (safety/social connection)**
 - **Sympathetic (fight/flight)**
 - **Dorsal vagal (shutdown/freeze)**
- Shows how our sense of **safety vs threat** drives emotional and behavioral states.

Strengths:

- Brings the **body and nervous system** into the emotional conversation.
- Trauma-informed — explains why people react with shutdown or hyperarousal.
- Very influential in therapy, somatics, and trauma research.

What it misses:

- Focuses on **physiology**, not on the **emotional meaning-patterns** themselves.
- Doesn't map **relational dynamics** (e.g., manipulation, power, abuse).
- No clear **tools for communication or repair** — it explains states but doesn't guide action.
- Can feel technical for non-specialists.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Integrates **nervous system states** with **emotional logic and meaning**.
- Explains how these states translate into **patterns of connection, defense, manipulation, and oppression**.
- Provides **visual, relational tools** that make survival patterns understandable for everyday people.

- Bridges **somatic awareness** with **relational repair**.

5. Zones of Regulation — developed by Leah Kuypers

Consists on:

- A color-coded tool widely used in schools.
- Groups emotional states into 4 “zones”:
 - **Blue Zone**: low energy, sadness, tiredness.
 - **Green Zone**: calm, ready to learn.
 - **Yellow Zone**: heightened, anxious, silly, excited.
 - **Red Zone**: anger, terror, out of control.
- Taught as a way for children to **recognize and manage emotions**.

Strengths:

- Extremely **simple and accessible**.
- Popular in **education worldwide**.
- Gives children a **shared language** for feelings.

What it misses:

- Oversimplifies — puts **huge ranges of emotions into one “zone.”**
- Often used as a **behavior management tool** rather than true emotional literacy.
- Not trauma-informed — can **shame children** for being in “red” instead of showing why.
- No gradients or systemic understanding.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Provides **gradients within each emotion**, not just colors.
- Trauma-aware: explains **why emotions distort**, not just how to label them.
- Moves from **behavior control** to **emotional understanding and repair**.
- Designed to be **neurodivergent-friendly**, avoiding shaming or simplification.

6. Freud’s Ego Model — developed by Sigmund Freud (1923)

Consists on:

Divides the psyche into three structures: **id** (instinctual drives), **ego** (rational mediator), and **superego** (moral authority). Emotions and behaviors are seen as the outcome of conflicts between these three forces.

Strengths:

- Groundbreaking attempt to describe inner psychological conflict.
- Recognized that part of the self works unconsciously.
- Set the foundation for later theories of self and defense.

What it misses:

- Frames conflict as mainly internal, without relational/systemic context.
- Lacks trauma-informed understanding of survival states.
- Rigid categories that don't account for gradients or social dynamics.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Ego is created by survival strategies, not inherent.
- Expands beyond three parts into a **spectrum of modes: Connect–Belonging, Protect–Defense, Manipulation, Tyranny.**
- Shows how survival states distort emotions, not just within the individual but in relationships and systems.
- Provides visual maps and harm-measurement scales for repair.

7. Winnicott's True/False Self — developed by Donald Winnicott

Consists on:

Explains how children develop a **True Self** when caregivers attune, but a **False Self** when they must comply with others' needs for survival.

Strengths:

- Validates the pain of losing authenticity in early relationships.
- Describes the survival value of a False Self.
- Highly influential in developmental and trauma theory.

What it misses:

- Doesn't show how masks escalate into manipulation or oppression.
- Focuses mainly on childhood, less on lifelong systemic contexts.
- Less visual/systemic for practical use.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Integrates the concept of False Self into the **Ego Persona Construct Framework.**
- Maps how masks form, shift, and distort across the gradient.
- Offers tools to **rebuild authenticity** and restore belonging.

8. Rogers' Organismic Valuing — developed by Carl Rogers

Consists on:

Posits that humans have an **innate drive toward growth, healing, and authenticity** if conditions of empathy, acceptance, and congruence are present.

Strengths:

- Optimistic and empowering; highlights inner compass toward well-being.
- Strong basis for person-centered therapy.
- Emphasizes empathy and unconditional positive regard.

What it misses:

- Doesn't map how trauma distorts or blocks the compass.
- Assumes conditions of safety that may not exist.
- Less explicit about systemic or relational harm.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Shows how survival modes **override or distort** the organismic compass.
- Explains how repair reopens the path to belonging and growth.
- Places authenticity inside a visual gradient, making distortions visible.

9. Jung's Persona — developed by Carl Jung

Consists on:

The **Persona** is the "mask" we present to society — a social role that allows us to adapt and be accepted, but can hide our deeper self.

Strengths:

- Recognizes the adaptive function of masks.
- Highlights the tension between public identity and inner reality.
- Influenced modern understandings of role-play and identity.

What it misses:

- Stays symbolic and less practical for trauma survivors.
- Doesn't map gradients of protective vs manipulative masks.
- Offers little guidance for repair or authenticity.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Places Persona inside the **Role Mask Gradient**.
- Maps how masks shift from protection → manipulation → tyranny.
- Provides concrete tools for reclaiming authenticity and belonging.

10. Internal Family Systems (IFS) — developed by Richard Schwartz

Consists on:

A therapeutic model that views the mind as made of **parts**: protectors, managers, exiles, and the Self. Healing involves building trust and balance among parts.

Strengths:

- Trauma-informed and compassionate.
- Normalizes protective strategies instead of pathologizing them.
- Gives people a language for inner dialogue.

What it misses:

- Focuses inward, less on systemic oppression and malicious intent.
- Parts are sometimes treated in isolation from social context.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Integrates parts into a **relational/systemic gradient**.
- Explains how inner protectors mirror relational patterns (e.g., defense, control, tyranny).
- Adds harm-measurement scales to situate personal healing inside collective repair.

11. Ego Development Theory — developed by Jane Loevinger & others

Consists on:

Maps stages of identity development, from **pre-conventional** to **post-autonomous**, showing how self-concept and meaning-making evolve.

Strengths:

- Provides a structured roadmap of self-growth.
- Useful for developmental psychology and leadership studies.
- Recognizes higher levels of self-awareness and integration.

What it misses:

- Largely cognitive; underplays trauma and emotional survival.
- Assumes linear progression, not accounting for regression or trauma freeze.
- Limited attention to relational abuse and systemic oppression.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Shows how trauma can **stall or distort** development.

- Integrates identity growth with survival/belonging gradients.
 - Frames development as **dynamic and relational**, not only cognitive.
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12. Goffman's Dramaturgical Self — Erving Goffman

Consists on:

Proposes that social life is like a **stage**, where people play roles depending on audience, context, and setting.

Strengths:

- Brilliant metaphor of performance.
- Shows adaptability of the self in different contexts.
- Groundwork for Role Theory and social psychology.

What it misses:

- Doesn't distinguish authentic roles from survival-driven ones.
- Overlooks how trauma and power distort role-play.
- Provides no path for repair or authenticity.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Expands into the **Role Mask Gradient**.
 - Distinguishes masks rooted in belonging vs defense vs manipulation.
 - Shows pathways for reclaiming authenticity and healing from role entrapment.
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13. Defense Mechanisms — Freud & Anna Freud

Consists on:

Explains unconscious strategies like **denial, repression, projection, rationalization** that the ego uses to avoid pain or conflict.

Strengths:

- Early recognition of protective psychological strategies.
- Still widely referenced in clinical psychology.
- Shows how the mind adapts under stress.

What it misses:

- Often pathologizes defenses without showing survival purpose.
- Focused mainly on intrapsychic rather than relational dynamics.
- Doesn't differentiate protective from harmful uses.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Reframes defenses as **adaptive survival responses**.
- Places defenses on a gradient: protection → manipulation → tyranny.
- Connects defenses to systemic harm and relational repair.

14. Cognitive Dissonance Theory — Leon Festinger

Consists on:

Explains the discomfort when beliefs, emotions, or actions conflict. People resolve dissonance by changing beliefs, justifying actions, or denying contradictions.

Strengths:

- Shows how humans strive for consistency.
- Applies across decision-making, morality, and identity.
- Influential in psychology and behavioral economics.

What it misses:

- Focuses on cognition, not somatic/emotional experience.
- Underexplains how trauma shapes dissonance resolution.
- Doesn't address manipulation or denial in abusive contexts.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Shows dissonance as **felt somatically and emotionally**.
- Explains how unresolved dissonance pushes people into denial, defense, or manipulation.
- Provides repair tools to face contradictions without harm.

15. Disorganized Attachment & Complex PTSD Models

Consists on:

Attachment theory expanded: **Disorganized Attachment** explains paradoxical push-pull dynamics of fear and desire for closeness. **Complex PTSD** describes long-term effects of chronic trauma, including emotional dysregulation and identity disturbance.

Strengths:

- Trauma-informed and relationally focused.
- Explains paradoxes survivors live with (closeness = danger).
- Connects childhood experiences to adult patterns.

What it misses:

- Often focused narrowly on childhood or clinical trauma.
- Doesn't fully map how patterns scale into systems.

- Limited tools for visualizing harm and repair.

What TEG-Blue adds:

- Integrates attachment and CPTSD into the **Emotional Gradient Framework**.
- Shows how disorganized patterns map onto defense/manipulation cycles.
- Offers gradients and tools for relational repair and nervous system healing.

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Emotional Models Comparison Table

| | Model | Strengths | What it misses | What TEG-Blue adds |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions | Clear visual map of 8 primary emotions; shows intensity and blending; useful for vocabulary. | Treats emotions as fixed buckets; ignores context (Belonging vs Defense); no repair pathway. | Maps gradients inside each emotion; explains distortions (boundary anger vs control anger); adds trauma-informed harm scales; offers tools for repair. |
| 2 | NVC — Nonviolent Communication | Simple 4-step structure (observation, feeling, need, request); encourages empathy; reduces blame. | Assumes safety; can be weaponized; no map of distortions; doesn't explain survival shifts. | Shows when NVC fails (manipulation, tyranny); adds harm vs discomfort gradients; embeds in Connect/Protect framework; visual, neurodivergent-friendly tools. |
| 3 | CBT — Cognitive Behavioral Therapy | Practical, structured, evidence-based; effective for anxiety, depression; challenges distorted thoughts. | Over-focus on thoughts; minimizes body/nervous system; misses relational abuse/systemic harm. | Integrates body + somatic patterns; situates emotions in relational/systemic context; trauma gradients distinguish survival vs malicious intent; connects personal healing with social repair. |
| 4 | Polyvagal Theory — Stephen Porges | Explains nervous system states (safety, fight/flight, shutdown); trauma-informed; widely influential. | Focuses on physiology, not meaning; lacks relational/power dynamics; no repair | Links nervous states to emotional logic (Connect, Protect, Manipulation, Tyranny); makes survival patterns |

| | Model | Strengths | What it misses | What TEG-Blue adds |
|----|---|---|---|--|
| | | | tools; technical for non-specialists. | visible; provides accessible visual tools; bridges somatics with repair. |
| 5 | Zones of Regulation — Leah Kuypers | Simple, accessible; widely used in schools; gives children a shared emotional language. | Oversimplifies (broad zones, little nuance); often behavior-control focused; not trauma-informed; can shame children. | Provides gradients inside emotions; explains why emotions distort; shifts from behavior control to literacy/repair; neurodivergent-friendly. |
| 6 | Freud's Ego Model (1923) | Early map of inner conflict (id, ego, superego); recognized unconscious forces; foundational to psychoanalysis. | Intrapsychic focus, little systemic/relational context; rigid categories; not trauma-aware. | Expands into modes gradient (Belonging, Defense, Manipulation, Tyranny); shows how survival distorts emotions in relationships; visual repair maps. |
| 7 | Winnicott's True/False Self | Explains survival cost of False Self; validates loss of authenticity; trauma-aware. | Narrowly child-focused; doesn't show escalation to manipulation/tyranny; not visual/systemic. | Integrated into Ego Persona Construct Framework ; maps mask formation/distortion; tools for rebuilding authenticity and belonging. |
| 8 | Rogers — Organismic Valuing | Optimistic: humans have innate drive toward growth and authenticity; basis for person-centered therapy. | Doesn't show how trauma distorts/blocks the compass; assumes safe conditions; little systemic focus. | Shows how survival overrides/distorts compass; explains repair as re-opening belonging; situates compass in a visible gradient. |
| 9 | Jung — The Persona | Highlights adaptive social masks; explains tension between inner and outer identity. | Symbolic, less practical for trauma repair; doesn't map protective vs manipulative roles. | Expanded in Role Mask Gradient ; maps masks shifting from protection → manipulation → tyranny; pathways to authenticity. |
| 10 | Internal Family Systems (IFS) | Compassionate, trauma-informed; normalizes parts; strong healing model. | Focuses inward; less systemic/malicious intent focus; parts sometimes isolated from social context. | Integrates parts into systemic gradient; maps protectors/managers to survival modes; harm scales link |

| | Model | Strengths | What it misses | What TEG-Blue adds |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| | | | | personal healing with collective repair. |
| 11 | Ego Development Theory — Jane Loevinger | Structured roadmap of identity growth; useful for psychology/leadership; recognizes higher integration stages. | Cognitive bias; assumes linearity; underplays trauma freezes/regressions; little on systemic abuse. | Shows trauma can stall/distort growth; ties identity to survival/belonging gradients; frames development as dynamic and relational. |
| 12 | Goffman's Dramaturgical Self / Role Theory | Brilliant metaphor of social performance; explains adaptability across contexts. | Doesn't distinguish authentic vs survival-driven roles; ignores trauma/power distortions. | Extended as Role Mask Gradient ; distinguishes roles rooted in belonging vs defense vs manipulation; repair pathways for authenticity. |
| 13 | Defense Mechanisms — Freud & Anna Freud | Early recognition of unconscious protective strategies; widely cited in clinical psychology. | Pathologizes defenses; focused intrapsychically; doesn't differentiate protective vs harmful. | Reframed as adaptive survival responses ; mapped as protection → manipulation → tyranny; linked to systemic harm/repair. |
| 14 | Cognitive Dissonance Theory — Leon Festinger | Explains discomfort when beliefs/actions conflict; broad applications in decision-making. | Overly cognitive; underplays trauma/emotion; little attention to abuse/manipulation contexts. | Shows dissonance as somatic/emotional ; maps how unresolved dissonance leads to denial, defense, manipulation; repair tools for contradictions. |
| 15 | Disorganized Attachment & Complex PTSD Models | Trauma-informed; explains paradoxical push-pull dynamics; links chronic trauma to identity/emotional dysregulation. | Often narrow child/clinical focus; weak on systemic mapping; lacks visual repair tools. | Integrated into Emotional Gradient Framework ; maps disorganized patterns to defense/manipulation cycles; offers gradients and tools for relational repair and nervous healing. |
| TEG-Blue™ — Emotional Technology for Healing and Repair | | | | |
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