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Interactional Analysis (IA) Info Leaflet

At Rooted, we believe that relationships shape who we are — especially for children. Interactional Analysis (IA) helps us understand the quality of those relationships by looking closely at how people interact, communicate, and respond to one another.

What Is Interactional Analysis?

Interactional Analysis is a specialised assessment process that focuses on how individuals behave and connect during real-life interactions. Rather than focusing only on what people say, IA looks at the non-verbal messages, emotional reactions, and communication patterns between them.

It's often used to gain deeper insight into:

- The bond between a parent and child
- How children experience their caregivers
- How family members communicate and resolve conflict
- The emotional atmosphere within a family or system

When Is It Used?

IA can be valuable in many situations, including:

- Care and contact assessments
- Parent–child relationship concerns
- Attachment or bonding evaluations
- Family difficulties or parenting plans after separation
- Court-directed or social work assessments

What Happens During the Process?

1. **Pre-Interview** – A pre-interview is done with the child and the caregiver separately, and helps both parties to understand how the rest of the process will go and what each step involves.
2. **Observation Sessions** – The social worker observes how you and your child (or other family members) interact through play, conversation, or structured tasks.

3. **Individual Conversations** – Each person has an opportunity to share their feelings and experiences privately.

4. **Analysis and Feedback** – The practitioner analyses the observations and provides clear feedback or a written report, depending on the purpose of the assessment.

Why Choose Interactional Analysis?

Interactional Analysis offers a balanced, child-focused view of relationships.

It can:

- Highlight strengths and positive connections
- Identify areas that may need support
- Help professionals make informed, fair recommendations
- Support the best interests of the child

Important to Know

- IA is an assessment, not a form of therapy.
- It aims to understand patterns, not assign blame.
- The process is confidential, ethical, and guided by professional standards.

All assessments at Rooted follow the ethical guidelines of the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) and relevant child-protection laws.

How Long Does It Take?

The IA process all happens in one day, unless the process has to be done with multiple caregivers or children. The pre-interview with the child and the caregiver takes about 30mins, the observation sessions takes on average 1 hour, and the post interview takes between 30 – 45mins.

Our Commitment

At Rooted, we approach every family with respect, compassion, and neutrality.

Our goal is to understand relationships in a way that supports each person's wellbeing and keeps the child's best interest at heart.