

IDTA Newsletter

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Editorial

The start of a new year! A time for new beginnings, new possibilities and a time for re-assessment of old targets and goals. A time for looking forward, for planning and discovery. The time of year when my Try Hard could get into overdrive if I let it!

And there is plenty to whip up enthusiasm in this issue of the newsletter. A real call to action from Kaz Stuart, with an article in which she describes her efforts to get TA established and recognised in educational accreditation frameworks. She has a vision that TA becomes part of the National Curriculum – how's that for a New Year resolution?!

Nicky Rosewell has kindly allowed us to reprint an article originally published in Emotional Literacy Update (November 2003) in which she gives a first hand account of how her school has adopted TA. Every child in the school has been introduced to Parent, Adult, Child. Teachers were also committed to using the framework, and there were plans in place to run workshops for parents. What a great example to support the vision of TA being used and recognised in every school in the country!

IDTA Council Members are working hard to develop and market TA qualifications which will further encourage the application of Developmental TA in our schools and organisations. Other members of Council work tirelessly on various committees, and Trudi Newton

gives us a very useful run-down of the various international committees and how they work together, as well as an explanation of what the acronyms stand for. I for one am particularly grateful to Trudi for this clear explanation! It also serves to highlight the global nature of TA, and how the IDTA is connected to other TA organisations around the world.

There are lots of ways to explore these global connections, either by getting involved at committee level or attending conferences in the UK and around the world. Check out the EATA website for details of their July conference in Switzerland, or the ITAA website for information on their conference in San Francisco in August.

And the IDTA are planning this year's conference for 9 and 10 November, venue to be arranged. Put the date in the diary now! Attending conferences is a great way to feel and stay connected to other TA practitioners around the world. It is also the best way to keep up-to-date with developments in TA theory.

I am very excited by the possibilities that 2007 offers and, on a personal note, also about my own opportunities for learning and developing my TA knowledge and practice this year.

On behalf of IDTA Council, may I wish all members a peaceful, happy and developmental New Year!

Lynda Tongue
Editor

Windows on Accreditation

My window on the world is IOKUOK. Not everyone operates from this presupposition though. In schools some teachers and kids can operate in IOKUNOK or INOUNOK. Governing bodies such as the DfES also often operate (for pragmatic and social reasons) in a conditional frame IOKUOK - if you do what we say. This is the underpinning reason for me developing external accreditation of TA. Here is some background.

Use of TA in schools is growing – all credit to practitioners like Giles Barrow and Emma Bradshaw. Schools Behaviour Improvement Teams and Special Needs departments have seen the benefits of TA as a way to improve behaviour and inter-relationships in schools. This is great. It is also great to see that some of the SEALS (Social Emotional Aspects of Learning) materials in primary schools are based upon TA models.

My vision for TA in schools is that it becomes a part of the National Curriculum, or a standard part of the teaching and learning styles adopted – overtly. Using TA for small groups of behaviourally difficult young people in small pockets across the country is a fantastic starting point.

Some schools go further than this and have introduced the Transactional Analysis Proficiency Award for Children and Young People (TAPACY). TAPACY is a way of accrediting TA in schools. It employs best practice from TA, with contracting with the kids to be there for the session, it delivers a range of TA concepts that are useful for kids in school, features peer and adult feedback and additionally celebrates their achievements with a prize giving. The scheme accredits the young people through an IDTA administered, developed and quality assured scheme.

In the current climate of performance indicators however, some schools find it hard to adopt TA as it is a) not endorsed by the Government or b) not part of the curriculum or standards that teachers are assessed against. This can be a real barrier to some schools adopting TAPACY.

I am passionate about the gains that there are in embedding TA in schools. I could see an opportunity to dually accredit TAPACY with a scheme with which schools are familiar. The Open College Network (OCN) is a forward looking accreditation system that allows member organisations to accredit units that they write themselves, that are tailor-made to their context of work (IOKUOK). OCN is accepted by schools as they have a quality assurance system in place, and are aligned to the National Qualifications Framework, creating a win-win situation.

What now exists is an OCN Level 1, two-credit course that dually accredits the TAPACY. This is available to all organisations that are OCN registered through the Unit bank – this creates exposure to TA in a wide context.

At this point I was about to circulate news about the new Unit, but was stalled by a dilemma.

The IDTA is **the** governing body that accredits TA for young people. But it is not accepted as a 'recognised' (IOKUNOK) certificate by the DfES. Use of the OCN TA for Young People unit allows schools access to TA in a form that is DfES IOKUOK. It does not however, give credit to the IDTA, and could therefore potentially undermine it if adopted more widely than the IDTA TAPACY.

My resolution was to view the unit as an offering for schools that have no other way to access TA accreditation for young people. Wherever possible however, I feel we

should be promoting the IDTA and offering this as the predominant way of accrediting TA. With this approach, kids will get TA, teachers will learn alongside them, the IDTA will grow, and the DfES will eventually recognise TAPACY as a qualification in its own right - EOK! (Everyone is OK)!

As well as working with young people, I additionally have the opportunity to deliver professional development to people who work with children and young people. I regularly deliver training in the use of experiential learning and NLP in youth work settings. I realised that I was missing a trick here.

On the back of the TA for Young People unit, I created a simple and flexible unit for professionals. Transactional Analysis for Youth Work accredits understanding of a range of TA concepts, and the learners' understanding of their application in relation to youth work (Level 3, 2 Credits). It has, however, allowed access to the subject to youth workers. The unit allows us to convey the benefits of TA for them individually in their work settings, and I am confident that this will additionally pave the way for more young people to come into contact with TAPACY as a result.

I encourage other practitioners to look at the units and give feedback on the content, application, or their uses in promoting TA. If there are further 'products', 'syllabi' or areas that would benefit from alignment with the National Qualifications Framework through OCN or other dual accreditation, I would welcome a conversation.

Will students one day be enrolling onto Transactional Analysis Degrees? I believe we can make this happen!

Kaz Stuart, Brathay Hall, Cumbria 015394 39760

EATA

European Association for
Transactional Analysis
PTSC
Professional Training Standards
Committee
COC
Commission of Certification

ITAA

International Transactional Analysis
Association
TSC
Training Standards Committee
BOC
Board of Certification
T&CC
Training and Certification Council

WPATA

Western Pacific Association for
Transactional Analysis

TACC

Transactional Analysis
Certification Council

What do all those letters mean?

What they mean (the letters I will refer to here anyway) is set out to the left of this article – some of them I still have to look up to be sure. When I took on the role of liaison for IDTA Council I think the biggest part of it was getting my head around the working relationships between the various international TA committees and councils so that I could explain them to others. Another part is monitoring the decisions they make about training and exams, particularly as they affect developmental practitioners, and feeding in thinking and proposals from IDTA about implications and further development. Being involved in this is exciting and ever-changing – one of the things I enjoy about the international TA community is the willingness to take on changes and keep on thinking and problem solving.

When EATA separated from ITAA there was an agreement that the two

associations would maintain mutual recognition of qualifications and standards of training. This agreement now also includes WPATA. In order to sustain constant awareness of issues affecting any one of the associations, and to keep world-wide practice for certification consistent, TACC meets once a year at international conferences, either in Europe or elsewhere, and members are in continual email contact. TACC comprises the Chairs of PTSC and COC from EATA, of TSC and BOC from ITAA and WPATA. T&CC, in case you are wondering, is TSC and BOC acting together to run the training and certification process 'for' ITAA – it is independent of ITAA because of the requirements of California law relating to education charities.

So where do I come in? I am a member of TACC because I am currently co-chair of BOC, and I am also chair of the education task force which has, for instance, written the education core competencies and re-written the exam questions and is now re-writing the written exam guidelines (about time too).

By now, if you are still with me, you would probably like an example of how this all works. We have an instance from this summer's meeting in Istanbul of something that was of concern to IDTA – organisational competencies. There had been some disagreement about how these were defined (briefly, whether training could be an organisational practice or whether it is by definition educational), and this issue was brought to TACC by Suriyaprakash on behalf of TSC. After some discussion an amendment was agreed (that training can be part of an organisational contract as long as the connection to the development of the whole organisation can be demonstrated). This decision now gets fed back to PTSC via the chair, who was present at the meeting, and TSC (done during the conference), ratified, and then published in PTSC Telegram (EATA) and T&CC Newsletter (ITAA).

Sometimes the process works the other way, that a decision is made, say by PTSC, but because of the 'mutuality' agreement it is not activated until it has been put to TACC and accepted by the other parties. Then it eventually appears in the handbooks and becomes normal practice.

This has been a long explanation of how the system works. My role in IDTA is really about being aware of what is going on in these various 'letters' and feeding information and concerns in both directions. At the moment I am well placed to be able to do that, and happily there are several IDTA members involved in some way who hopefully will take on this role in the future.

Trudi Newton

Research

The Sutton Group

In an earlier issue I wrote about the Sutton Group and the work we have achieved since we first met. Each year we have a new focus for our work and at the time I wrote we were hoping to carry out a piece of research. The good news is that it is going to happen! The aim of our study is to investigate whether or not children who have experienced TA for three years at their middle school manage their transfer to high school better or differently to those who haven't experienced TA at all.

The data collection is scheduled to take place during the first week of February with a view to having the study written up by the end of the academic year. Watch this space for updates!

Anthea Harding
IDTA Chair of Research

I'm OK, My School is OK

Grange Middle School is situated in South Harrow and serves a catchment area of mixed private and council-owned properties. The school has a culturally diverse population and a significant number of children are refugees and asylum seekers. Many children are from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and emotional literacy is a high priority within the school.

Over the years we have spent a great deal of time visiting and re-visiting behaviour management in the school. We had a good behaviour policy and had developed strategies, rewards and sanctions. However, the situation was not changing. It could be argued that it was getting worse, which was having an adverse effect upon the emotional health and well-being of all members in the school community.

We were spending a lot of our time fire fighting rather than dealing with the underlying culture. We used a tree analogy to understand this. The branches of the tree were our procedures and guidelines and the trunk our Behaviour Policy. The roots were the underlying culture representing the beliefs, values and expectations of behaviour management. It was the roots we needed to strengthen in order to support the tree.

The way we sought to understand and address this was by seeking to promote emotional literacy through TA. The basic TA concepts made sense to the staff, they are simple and easy to understand:

- I'm OK, You're OK
- Everyone can think
- Anyone can change

TA provides a framework for managing conflict and actively involves children in understanding and making decisions about their own behaviour. It offers opportunities for using praise and positive affirmations. It is respectful of everyone and promotes the well being of both adults and children. It provides a core framework that allows the use of other behaviour management models.

It was decided to undertake a year long project working with Giles Barrow, a Behaviour Consultant who uses TA concepts as a basis for his work. There were a series of discussions at both senior management and whole staff level prior to the meeting and subsequent training with Giles. A Behaviour Working Party was set up as a focus group and there was an expectation for all staff to use the basic TA concepts and approach. It was not always easy to use the language, but staff were encouraged to make decisions about what was comfortable for them as individuals.

We are now at the end of the first year and a significant amount has been achieved. By the end of the summer term every child in the school had been introduced to the concept of the Parent, Adult and Child ego states and had a basic understanding of the language. There are lots of examples of staff using TA around the school and experiencing success.

During one of the sessions introducing the ego state model to a class of 10/11 year olds one boy questioned the Controlling Parent ego-state. He reflected on whether it was always negative or were there times when the person was using Controlling Parent to make a decision that was good for him but not necessarily what he wanted. He gave being told to go to bed when he didn't want to go as an example. This represented a good understanding and application of the subject being introduced.

On another occasion I was able to use concepts I had introduced in a series of

assemblies on bullying using the Drama Triangle and ultimately the Winner's Triangle. I had used a story broken down into short excerpts to illustrate how the game is played and the different roles individuals take. Later in the day I was dealing with an incident involving a group of 9/10 year olds and used the assembly to reinforce our discussion. I asked the group what had happened to the boy in the story and the response was, "Oh, he switched roles from being the Persecutor to the Victim". We were then able to pursue this to solve the problem that had arisen between that group of children.

It is clear, however, that we are just at the beginning. Outstanding issues remain – this is not a short-term solution and was never intended to be so. It is not easy for everyone to use TA concepts – it does require change and commitment from adults and not just the children. We still believe that this is the approach we wish to follow.

The training will continue into the next academic year with optional sessions for staff to attend and opportunities for individual staff and year group teams to seek support for specific or group issues. We plan to extend the work to include parents' workshops in order to involve, support and work in partnership with all members of the school community.

Nicky Rosewell

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About IDTA

The IDTA aims to provide networking and professional development opportunities to practitioners using DTA. The purpose of this newsletter is not only to update members but also to invite participation in the growth of the Institute. Views expressed in this newsletter are those of contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the IDTA.

Contributions please!

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