



IDTA Newsletter

Volume 16 Issue 1

March 2021

Welcome to the first issue for 2021. What a year since March 2020!

It began with exciting plans for WTAC2020 - the World TA Conference - on target for 1000 participants, and has ended with worldwide lockdowns, numerous online TA events and conferences even though ITAA/EATA/UKATA/FTAA/IARTA rejected the online version of the World TA Conference they had asked to be run. And the announcement on page 4 from ITAA that just over 20% refunds are being made to those who had paid to attend the on-site conference - even though enough of them had agreed to a postponement to 2023 to allow others to have full refunds - and all of that with IDTA protesting throughout the process of cancellation.

To balance that, IDTA is delighted to announce that they have become part of the initiative to launch a new TA association - WOTAA - the World Online Transactional Analysis Association. See page 3 for more details – and every IDTA member is now a member of WOTAA - with a choice of whether they wish to be included in the membership list that is being set up to enable connections across the worldwide TA community.



Plus this issue contains the usual update about IDTA Council business, an article about TA qualifications by Lynda Tongue, and an update from Julie Hay to Berne's material about the culture of groups. And there is an announcement of a new series of free TA books!!!

Contents

IDTA Council News.....	2
WOTAA - World Online TA Association.....	3
WTAC2020 Update.....	6
An alternative route to TA qualifications!..... <i>Lynda Tongue</i>	8
TA from Then to Now - FREE Book Series begins.....	10
Systemic Considerations ETC..... <i>Julie Hay</i>	11

IDTA Council News

Council Meetings

IDTA Council had a busy online meeting in February, reviewing our membership in terms of countries and categories, reviewing our finances, making the decision to join the newly created World Online TA Association receiving an update from our EATA delegate, receiving reports on the ways in which IBOC had successfully run online CTA exams, and discussing the composition of IDTA Council for the future. Several of these items are reported on in more detail below.

The next IDTA Council meeting is due to be held online on 11 May – we invite all members to contact us if you want to suggest items for the agenda – or would like to attend as an observer.

WOTAA

Established by the IDTA members of the Organising Committee for the World TA Conference 2020, which was cancelled by ITAA and EATA, IDTA has confirmed its earlier decision in principle and is now the first Association that is affiliated to EATA, is a Partner Organisation with ITAA, and is an organisational member of the World Online TA Association. Since our meeting, we have been joined by associations in Georgia and Kazakhstan. As this newsletter appears, so will the introductory webpage for WOTAA www.wotaa.org. There is more information about WOTAA on page 3.

IDTA members will be contacted separately to progress this. The website gives details of the information that will be displayed. This will include membership details but only to the extent that an individual chooses. A form is being designed to capture the necessary information. Every IDTA member will be given the opportunity to decide whether they wish to appear in the membership list or not. If they do, they can choose how much information they want shown and especially how they would like to be contacted by other members.

EATA Delegate Report

IDTA has a delegate to EATA because we are currently the only Special Interest Group. Once other Special Interest Groups are affiliated, there will be a shared delegate. Our current delegate is Julie Hay, who reported in February that:

- the Task force that EATA Council had set up to look at ethics issues is being led by a member of the Executive Committee, although that task force is meant to be looking at the role of the Ethics Adviser who appears to be a part of the Executive Committee;
- the IDTA Council offer to host the next meeting of the EATA Affiliated Presidents Platform (APP) has still only received indications of interest from 6 out of the 40 or more Presidents of EATA affiliated associations.

ICTAQ

We were excited to learn that there will soon be a series of free books issued under the auspices of ICTAQ (with which organisation IDTA has a contract for recognition of the qualifications). These will be reviews and critiques of TA literature and will be published as open access – paperbacks and Kindle via Amazon, where the costs will be only the Amazon production and distribution costs – and a PDF and an e-book that can be downloaded free.

Since the meeting, the first of these is appearing at the same time as this newsletter will be published. It is entitled *TA from Then to Now: Core Themes* – see page 10 for more details.

TA Exams

CTA exams have been run by IBOC. Traian Bossenmayer, Lynda Tongue and Julie Hay had all volunteered and reported that Sue Eusden and Jacqueline van Gent had done an excellent job of organising these. It was great to see that finally ITAA was recognising the opportunities offered by online connection.

WOTAA - www.wotaa.org

Three TA associations have already agreed to participate in this exciting initiative and bring all of their members into WOTAA. These are IDTA, TAAG and TADO and the details are given at on page 4. Within the next few weeks the members of those associations will be sent a form to indicate their preferences. Being a member does not mean that you *must* display your details, and if you are worried about showing contact details online there will be an option for you to be contacted only via WOTAA, where contact emails will be moderated before being passed on.

If you are reading this and you are not a member of IDTA, TAAG or TADO member, you can go to www.wotaa.org for more details.

WOTAA has been set up by Julie Hay, Lynda Tongue and Sandra Wilson, who were the remaining members of the Organising Committee for the ill-fated WTAC2020 (World TA Conference) that was cancelled by ITAA/EATA.

You will see on the website that the purpose of WOTAA is to :

Combat Privilege and Provide Permanence

It is intended to be something that brings together everyone interested in TA around the world, in ways which allow them to be in connection and contact with each other, regardless of where they are, how much TA they know, and any other form of difference or diversity that may apply. It is also intended to be something that continues to provide online connections after Covid has been sufficiently dealt with and we are able to move around the world freely again.

Privileges

WOTAA is based on combating four different privileges:

Physical Presence Privilege — we no longer need to restrict our conferences or training events to those who are able to travel to other countries.

Purchasing Power Privilege - WOTAA expects those involved to apply discounts (or allow donation amounts chosen by participant) so that fees for conferences, events, training and supervision will be adjusted to reflect the purchasing power of the recipient.

Professional Prerequisite Privilege - working online allows TA qualified professionals to provide services to countries without accredited TA trainers and supervisors; we will also be showing the various TA qualifications that exist apart from those run by ITAA/EATA.

Phonological Processing Privilege - we need to get away from the idea that you must know English! There are several volunteer interpreters already and the website is set up to be translated into many languages.

Permanence

Another aim of establishing WOTAA is to provide some permanence for online connection. Since Covid emerged there has been an explosion of online events but many of these are in the form of separate workshops. There are also indications that some initiatives are temporary only and will not continue, or will be reduced significantly, once Covid lockdowns have ended.

Such one-off events are great for continuing professional development but they are not necessarily providing an ongoing programme that can lead through to TA qualifications. For some qualifications, they may not even be counted towards advanced TA training hours, in the same way that attendance at conferences is no longer regarded by IBOC as advanced TA training.

How will WOTAA work?

WOTAA membership is obtained through a simple donation of the price of a cup of coffee in the country of the member. Members may join as individuals or through associations or institutes.

WOTAA will have an open access website containing several databases, including details of conferences being offered, training programmes that are leading to qualifications,

and events and workshops. For all of this, we will require the organisers to be operating the WOTAA discount system based on www.numbeo.org - they can set their prices based on their own country and then scale them up or down. Alternatively they can allow the recipients to choose their own size of donation.

For the database of members, anyone can put in their contact details and an indication of their involvement with TA. This can be used for people to get in touch with others with similar interests and language. It can also be used to find other TA students, practitioners, trainers and supervisors.

We are also planning to run WOTAA conferences. These will be organised as an ongoing conference consisting of 3–4-hour sessions on a weekly or monthly basis – there is no need to run 2- or 3-day conferences when we are not travelling to a venue.

WOTAA also has links to the International Centre for TA Qualifications (www.ictaq.org) because many of the same volunteers are involved. ICTAQ provides free the *International Journal of Transactional Analysis Research & Practice* (www.ijtarp.org), the associated Research Exchange (www.taresearch.org), and the TA Proficiency Awards (www.taproficiencyawards.org) with TA teaching to children, parents, teachers, unemployed people, etc, around the world. ICTAQ is also the body responsible for the publication of the new series of *TA from Then to Now* books which will be available free or at prices which cover only Amazon production and distribution costs – see page 10.

Climate Change

WOTAA has not been set up *because of* climate change but obviously it will be helpful in terms of the environment. Although the Internet uses energy and is therefore not carbon neutral, it uses far less than is involved when people travel to meetings and conferences.

It has been calculated that video conferencing produces 7% of the emissions involved in meeting physically. This is based on assuming car rides of around 20 km, so it will be even

better for the climate if we minimise how many people are travelling to other countries.

WOTAA Launch Members

During the process of setting up WOTAA, three TA associations have already joined and brought in their members:

IDTA – the Institute of Developmental Transactional Analysis (www.instdta.org)

TAAG - Transactional Analysis Association of Georgia (საქართველოს ტრანსაქციების ანალიზის ასოციაცია)

TADO - Transactional Analysis Development Association (OPTA Казахстан)

Finally – when you go to www.wotaa.org, try clicking on the picture of the globe in the top right-hand corner – and see all the flags appear 😊😊😊😊

WTAC2020 Update

On page 5 is the text of a statement that has just been issued by ITAA and UKATA. It implies that similar announcements will be made by other TA associations.

As you read it, please note that it contains *misleading information*.

They write that they were "not in a position to be able to stop it progressing" – yet the liquidation only occurred because they cancelled the conference. They did this in spite of the Organising Committee being authorised by them to negotiate with the biggest creditor (the hotel). We did that negotiation and the Hilton were amazingly constructive. We were able to agree a postponement to 2023 (at 2020 prices). We also received agreement from the majority of those who had booked to carry their bookings forward. This would have allowed us to give full refunds to those who were requesting them.

The liquidation was necessary because the company had been set up under UK law in order to protect UKATA from any financial liability in the event that something terrible happened. The floods in India around the time

of the last conference were very much in our minds. Setting up that UK company had been approved by UKATA. Under UK law, a company must declare insolvency if they are unable to pay their debts. When the associations announced that the conference was cancelled and that they would not agree to any postponement (even though they had given us written authorisation to negotiate) we had no choice but to follow UK law.

There had been a contract between the various associations involved about running the conference, which specified the shares of profits and losses. However, we then discovered that contract was not enforceable under UK law so we were unable to insist that those associations covered the losses. This applied even though EATA had €300,000 in the bank at that time and we needed less than €30,000 to enable us to make full refunds to everyone. Afterwards, we saw on Companies House that UKATA and IARTA both had enough money in the bank to have covered their share of the losses. It was only IDTA that was running with only a small amount of financial reserves. IDTA President was in any case removed from the communication channels by the other associations.

In the statement issued, they have also announced that they no longer regarded the online conference as official. However, they had authorised this when coronavirus first appeared and the Organising Committee were still hard at work arranging to run it. We had even received another 50 or so bookings from extra people. When the associations announced that they no longer regarded the online conference as official, the keynote speakers withdrew and other presenters began to withdraw as well. It therefore became impossible to continue with organising the conference when we had no way of knowing how many presenters would still be available.

Note also that it is not correct to say that the creditors are all who registered and paid to attend; the creditors include the hotel and the band.

ITAA/UKATA statement

Here is the statement issued by ITAA and UKATA:

Dear members of ITAA, UKATA, IARTA, FTAA,

As we all continue to adapt to the pandemic situation, we have been cooperating with the legal process following the cancellation of the World TA Conference (WTAC) last year. As you may belong to several associations you will most likely receive similar emails advising you of progress so far. We have had a strong collaborative resolve to address the issues raised by the WTAC as a united community and will continue to do so for the rest of the process.

The creditors to the WTAC (all who registered and paid to attend) have now received either a cash transfer or a cheque. You will have received 23.12% which is what is stated in the letter in English legal wording 23.12 pence in the pound of the paid amount back.

In the attached financial statement that comes with your payment notification, you can see that the Liquidation process costs about 77.171 British pounds, (almost 90.000 Euro) for the winding-up process. This is an amount charged based on a number of factors including the complexity of the liquidation and is within the amounts expected to be charged by a company of that stature. That said, we regret the high costs associated with this process and were unfortunately not in a position to be able to stop it progressing.

We regret the length of time taken by the liquidation process as much as the high financial loss for everyone. Although you have now had some of what you paid returned, the official liquidation process is not closed and will be finished in autumn 2021.

We will be following the liquidation through to its formal conclusion and in the meantime the heads of all the associations continue to meet to discuss this process and we will keep you informed.

We take the situation seriously and continue to work on it and regret the inconvenience

and hardship you have had with this long ongoing process.

Elana Leigh, ITAA President

Chitra Ravi, ITAA President Elect

David Gibbons, UKATA Chair

Heather Fowlie, IARTA Steering Group

Annie Rogers, FTAA Co-President

Rhae Hooper, FTAA Co-President

Organising Committee Chair Statement

Here is a personal statement from Julie Hay, who was Chair of the Organising Committee and the last remaining director of the UK company (because the other directors accepted her offer not to be involved when it became apparent that insolvency might be necessary).

I very much regret the need to continue this matter using social media and I know that there have been complaints about me doing that. However, there are no opportunities provided to present any alternative points of view when they make their announcements. Even the written statements I submitted as a delegate to EATA Council in July 2020 are not contained within the minutes of that meeting that have been issued.

When coronavirus emerged, people began to ask for refunds. I realised that we did not have enough money left in the bank because we had already paid deposits and for things like webpage and proposal software. It is illegal in the UK to carry on trading if you know you are insolvent. I therefore asked the presidents of the associations for help. Their response was to tell me that I was playing a psychological game. They did not seem to understand that one person cannot play a game – if I was doing so then it meant that they were doing so also.

In spite of this accusation, the Organising Committee and I continued to do our best, right up to the day when we learned through an announcement that the conference was cancelled, and then through another announcement that they had withdrawn from the online conference that they had asked us to organise.

At one point I asked if EATA could 'lend' the WTAC 2020 company (set up to protect UKATA from financial liability) about €30,000 because I knew that EATA had €300,000 in the bank. That also was refused

IDTA President did her best to explain to the other Presidents but their reaction was to remove her from all communications, even though IDTA was one of the 6 signatories to the conference contract. This turned out not to be enforceable under UK law anyway, and only IDTA exhibited any indication of feeling a moral obligation about fulfilling that contract.

The costs of the liquidation process were known at the time the associations cancelled the conference. Also known in advance was that costs would be increased when the associations decided to set up a Creditors' Committee. This is because the insolvency administrators charge for their time spent in meetings; it is very unusual for creditors to set up such a committee because there is very little they can do to influence what happens as the insolvency administrators are following UK law.

When I first talked to the insolvency administrators, they advised me to keep careful notes because I was the only remaining director and these notes would be representing meetings that would have normally been held between the Board of Directors. Anyone who wishes to read these can see them at

<http://bit.ly/WTAC2020DirectorLog>

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Unlike many open access journals, we do not charge authors to have their work published.

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TA Tribe

*Online Transactional Analysis Training and Supervision
for Coaches, Consultants, Teachers and Trainers*



Tribe Foundation Programme

Online Workshops 2020 -21

Lynda Tongue (TSTA-org) is offering a new series of online workshops from September 2020. This series aligns with the Certificate in Developmental TA, awarded by the International Centre for TA Qualifications (ICTAQ), and leads to **TA Practitioner** status. However, you are also welcome if you simply wish to refresh your TA theory, or perhaps are not seeking TA qualification at this time but are looking for continuing professional development.

This programme offers Developmental Transactional Analysis (DTA) theory and its application in the organisational context. The workshops give an opportunity to revisit, refresh or learn anew in small groups the powerful psychological approach to communication and confidence building that DTA offers.

The workshops are 6 hours duration, and the fees are £85 plus vat. They are live, highly interactive and are supported by workshop materials including powerpoint slides, reference and further reading lists and a workshop paper. The workshops aim to run twice a month and there is a discount offered for block bookings of five workshops.

For more information on the workshops, visit: www.ta-tribe.com/tribe-wshops.

Tribe Advanced Practitioners Group (TAPs)

Online Workshops 2020-21

This group is for those who have 2 – 3 years (or more) TA training experience and who have therefore got a good grasp of the core concepts. Once again, the group is for those who are intending to qualify in TA as well as those who are only interested in continuing professional development.

The Diploma and Advanced Diploma subjects and approaches will be covered over a rolling period of two to three years. The Diploma leads to **TA Advanced Practitioner** status, and the Advanced Practitioner to **TA Master Practitioner** status. The workshops are monthly, of two days duration (Friday and Saturday) and are online. The fee is £190 plus vat. Theory topics will be covered on the Friday, in order to deepen TA learning and application and Saturday is a supervision day. Individual and cascade supervisions will be conducted as required. Participants are also encouraged to bring recordings of their work, and to request live feedback on their teaching and/or coaching.

For more information on TAPs workshops, visit: www.ta-tribe.com/taps-wshops.

For information on the Certificate, Diploma and Advanced Diploma process, please visit our website pages: www.ta-tribe.com/accreditation and www.ta-tribe.com/qualifications.html and <https://ictaq.org>.

An alternative route to TA qualifications!

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Becoming a qualified Transactional Analyst takes time, effort, commitment – and not an inconsiderable amount of money. The learning path *needs* to be robust, the need for accruing many hours of learning, application and supervision justified from the point of view of ethical practice.

However, the journey can be a lonely one and many people drop out long before they would be expected to be ready to take their CTA exams. They will have already spent money and time on their personal and professional TA development, but may for varied reasons have felt the need to stop. The road to CTA can be a long one and someone leaving after one, two, or three years for example, will not have a TA qualification to show for their effort.

Many candidates find that their unresolved script issues only really surface as soon as they start to write their written exam. Students may show up well in the training room, but find the process of writing their written exam is when those script issues overwhelm, proving to be a big barrier. It is rather far down the line to discover these blocks at this point, and even more problematic when everything rests on one final oral exam.

On top of this, the Certified Transactional Analyst (CTA) status does not hold any currency in organisations so trainers, consultants, coaches and teachers etc, even once they have achieved this standard, will find that it does not mean anything to most commissioners of their work. The fact that they have come a long way in their professional and personal development, that they will have accrued hundreds of hours of training and supervision, successfully submitted a 24,000-word exam and passed a viva-style presentation will not mean much to an HR Director or Head Teacher. The same thing will apply to ICTAQ qualifications – although the titles of TA Practitioner,

Advanced TA Practitioner and Master Practitioner will be more familiar, thanks to the success of the Neuro-Linguistic Programming training. But there the similarity ends, as NLP training is far less rigorous than TA training.

Of course those of us in this community understand that we do not commit many weekend and evening hours, time away from family and not even mentioning the cost ... just for a piece of paper. Of course we understand what value and benefits TA brings to our lives personally and professionally – the development, the friendships, the opportunities to travel

But of course, here is another major factor, and it is something that has bothered me for some time – many people cannot afford to pursue TA, to become qualified, to share its power with others. Many people cannot find the hard cash required to travel to and to pay for training, to pay their supervisors, to travel to exam sites (often in other countries).

I am uncomfortable with the fact that TA is only available to those who can afford to spend thousands of pounds on themselves. I am uncomfortable with the fact that the many “TA airmiles” are contributing to climate change. I am uncomfortable with the fact that TA is only available to those who are mobile, and who do not have caring responsibilities. In 2016 I launched TA Tribe, and with the arrival of Covid 19 the transfer of my TA training was accelerated. Many other TA Trainers have done the same and I personally see this as a silver lining to the black cloud that is the pandemic.

Many years ago a group of TA Trainers got together to launch a continuing professional development qualification route to run alongside the EATA and ITAA qualifications. We also built in online examining (long before Covid!) and are really glad to see that the ITAA successfully launched online exams in February 2021. Online training, supervision and examining is a solution to make TA more accessible in many ways.

The portfolio route offered by ICTAQ is a work-based process whereby the trainee

selects projects from their practice, whether they are a coach, trainer, educator or consultant etc, then submits a portfolio based on a module which might be about individual development, or group process, or the characteristics of an organisation, or the dynamics of a relationship. This portfolio, including evidence (flip charts, emails, reports, workshop designs etc – in any language) and a TA-based reflective commentary is submitted for assessment. The journey to that assessment will consist of draft portfolios submitted to the sponsoring supervisor, feedback given, supervision taken, etc. A great deal of support for the client-work, in real time!

There are requirements for training, supervision and application hours that match those for CTA – the main difference is the inclusion of continuous assessment. This route facilitates an active blend of learning and direct application, time for supported reflection, more learning, more application etc in an upward learning spiral.

Diploma onwards includes a focus on research. So many National TA Associations are now reporting that they have real problems getting TA recognised due to a lack of research. So this element is built into the programme, requiring students to critique research methods and conduct their own research project. Many of the same volunteers who run ICTAQ are also involved in the publication of IJTARP – the International Journal of TA Research and Practice, where we are doing our best to overcome this issue.

Level	Title	EATA/ITAA
Certificate	TA Practitioner	
Diploma	TA Advanced Practitioner	
Advanced Diploma	TA Master Practitioner	CTA

The advantages to the student of these interim qualifications are primarily as follows:

1. The portfolio route allows for a continuing feedback loop which helps the practitioner to embed their TA learning in their work assignments
2. Like university qualifications, they provide a staged mechanism for taking your TA qualifications as far as you choose (and to decide over time how far you want to go);
3. They can run alongside if you want to achieve EATA/ITAA Certified TA Practitioner (CTA) status - the same requirements are being met and out team are P/TSTAs;
4. There are options for undertaking an MSc in Transactional Analysis alongside them (and for those with CTA already to convert that to an MSc through accreditation of prior learning)

We have learnt through experience that the closer contact afforded by the portfolio route of continuous professional development encourages students to achieve levels of proficiency whereas the lack of such steps means that people often give up because it is taking so many years.

By following the ICTAQ route, the trainee is supported to “show up”, to reveal to the supervisor their strengths and areas for improvement at the same time as they apply TA in their professional role. This is also significant in terms of protecting the public. Trainees are learning the theories, and concurrently receiving professional mentoring support from their supervisor. The trainee benefits, and so do their clients.

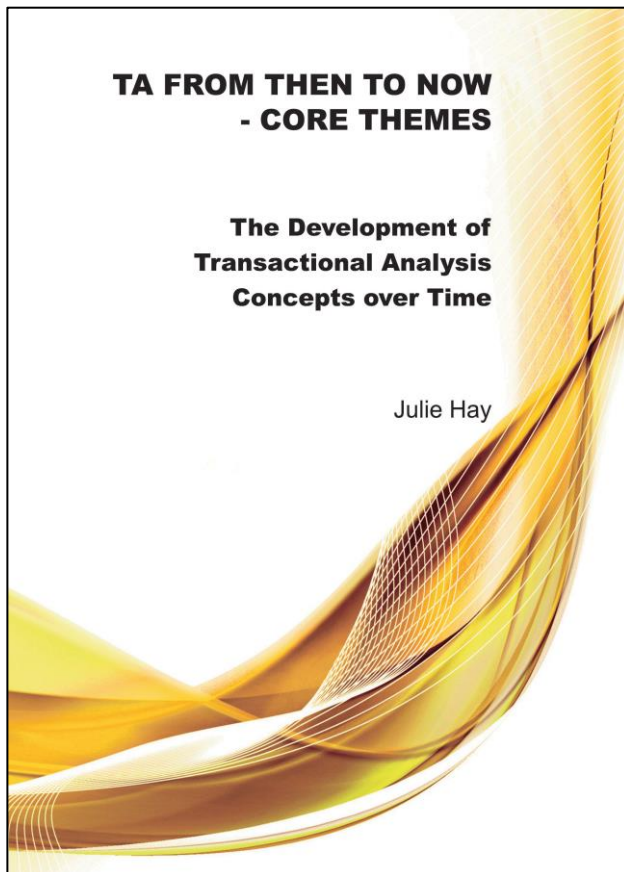
ICTAQ provides this qualification route with the joint aims of upholding the rigorous and ethical standards of TA as it is delivered to the public, and offering a mentoring mechanism to trainees in their professional practice. The latter also contributes to the ethical application of TA with clients.

The flexibility of this approach also means that after each stage of learning, the trainee

can either build on their progress by advancing to the next level, or they can leave TA training with a recognisable qualification and a TA identity. They can also still go for CTA if they wish, by completing the Master Practitioner level and submitting their work in a different format.

The TA qualification pathway does not have to be a solitary slog – it can be a focussed and planned trip, with meaningful exits and options for further excursions!

See www.ictaq.org for more details or email ictaq@ictaq.org.



A free series of books - you can download them as PDFs or e-books, or you can get them via Amazon as paperbacks and for Kindle, where you will pay only Amazon's production and distribution costs.

Announcing the first of the series – *TA from Then to Now* is a series of books based on the TA training workbooks that Julie Hay has been developing over several years. These were previously issued only as supplementary educational handouts to students in her TA training workshops and webinars, and intended as reviews and critiques of existing TA (and where appropriate, non-TA) literature.

Julie uses her extensive knowledge and experience to interpret the numerous ideas, frameworks, structures and developments of TA theory, from its Bernian roots to the present day, interspersing this with her own original ideas, reviews and critiques.

This series of books is Julie's way of contributing to the spread of TA knowledge, especially for those who lack access to TA books and journals. At the same time, she hopes that reading what she has written will prompt readers to go back to some of the original publications rather than relying only on her interpretation of what another author has written.

Julie is a keen supporter of making information freely available. In addition to issuing this series of books, she is the inaugural and current Editor of the International Journal of Transactional Analysis Research & Practice (www.ijtarp.org) which is published as an open access journal (free access to all and no fees to authors, who retain the copyright). Julie is also leading the launch in 2021 of WOTAA – the World Online TA Association (www.wotaa.org).

Here are the links to obtain copies of each option:

PDF (FREE) <https://bit.ly/3wd8Wq4> **e-book (FREE)** <https://bit.ly/3cE31md>

Or go to your usual Amazon website and search for Julie Hay for Paperback and/or Kindle (Amazon will charge their p&p costs)

Systemic Considerations - ETC

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The ETC in the title is a 'donkey bridge' – a gimmick to help people remember what they have learned – and I realise that it will not work in languages other than English but, as the author of a book about TA Donkey Bridges, I couldn't resist inventing a new one. I will explain below what it means.

During March 2021, I prepared a workbook entitled Systemic Considerations to be used as a handout on three 4-hour webinars that I was running. This prompted a question about what the word 'systemic' means. It might be defined as interacting entities within a boundary but systems are also influenced by their environments. I think about it as a set of things that are working together, where 'things' includes the surroundings. Whichever definition we use, systemic refers to just about everything that we pay attention to within transactional analysis – a single ego state, a person, an interaction, a family or a group, a school or an organisation, a country or a continent, and Earth and the universe.

TA and Systems

Much has already been written in the TA literature, especially by Robert Massey (1985, 1989, 1995, 2006) writing about families, Roger Blakeney (1978) about organisations; Alan Jacobs (1987) about power and autocracy. Others have written about various TA concepts as systems – we have the racket/script system (Erskine & Zalcman, 1979; Erskine & Morsund, 1988), the comparative script system (Sills and Mazzetti, 2009), the organisational Parent system (Kouwenhoven, 2016), plus others that are describing systems without necessarily using that word. Berne's structural model is a system, script matrix is a map of a system, Fox (1975) summarised Berne's material on organisations into a system, Newton (2007) presented the health system as a metaphor and used within it many other smaller systems. Much of the general material within TA is all about us using TA theories and

techniques to analyse the ways in which our clients are operating systemically.

I now want to present a new way of looking at systems that draws on some specific concepts. Berne (1963) wrote of the culture of groups and his material was extended by Graham Barnes (1977) when it was applied to the culture of schools of TA, and by Pearl Drego (1983) when she wrote of the Cultural Parent. The key to these was the idea that you can consider the culture in terms of Parent, Adult and Child ego states being presented as:

- *etiquette* – consisting of those values and beliefs that are agreed to by most of the Parent ego states of those present - I write most because it is not necessary that everyone agrees with every value and belief – only that they do not overtly challenge it unless they are doing that within the character of the group;
- *character* – comprising those behaviours that tend to be outside the etiquette but in which the Child ego states of some of those present will be allowed to engage – what can we get away with that will not have us thrown out of the group;
- *technical* – what do the Adult ego states of those present recognise is necessary in order to perform the tasks of the group or organisation – again this may not involve all of the Adult ego states – it may be determined by specialist personnel or management – someone who understands the technical needs of the tasks or the business to be conducted.

Another TA concept that allows us to think systemically is the notion of psychological boundaries (Hay, 2018), which was a development of original ideas by Denton Roberts (1975) when he suggested that we have a nested set of boundaries ranging from personal to cultural. Hay develops this into a range of nested boundaries from intrapersonal through groups and places to the planet. We can imagine that the etiquette, character and technical will be different in different circumstances, so that as we move across our own boundaries there

will be different expectations that we need to take into account.

ETC - Etiquette, Today, Character

Note that I have changed the middle concept to Today instead of Technical – I will explain my rationale for this below.

Holloway (1977) suggested a different way of drawing psychic organs to avoid the confusion of us constantly using three stacked circles for different models of ego states. However, Berne, Barnes and Drego all continued to draw circles when they were explaining Etiquette, Technical and Character. I propose that we now illustrate these concepts as shown in Figure 1, and how they combine into a system that includes three systems in Figure 2.



Figure 1: Etiquette, Today, Character

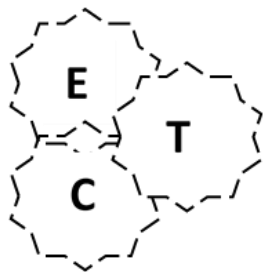


Figure 2: ETC

I have drawn dashed lines because within TA literature that is usually what we do when something exists only at the psychological level – when we cannot see it. I have changed them into circles with fuzzy edges so they are clearly not meant to be representing ego states. I have clustered them in a different way, which Berne (1961) also did in his early representations of the structural model of ego states. I have also overlapped them because I want to indicate that they are the systems which interconnect into one larger system. Berne drew some versions that were overlapping but he only did that when writing of perversions, and of course we normally only consider overlapping ego states as

representing contaminations. I propose that we can also consider that etiquette, technical and character may be overlapping and that we can take a positive psychology perspective and recognise that this could mean that etiquette and character are preventing technical from being in the here and now, but it could also mean that they are operating like a Venn diagram and interacting healthily and influencing each other. For now I am writing about etiquette, technical and character rather than about individual ego states but I think that we could use the same diagram with P, A, C within the fuzzy circles – maybe I will write about that in another article

The other significant change I am making is that I am changing 'Technical' to 'Today'. For me, this fits much better with the way in which Berne was indicating that this aspect of the culture should be decided based on the reality of the situation and the tasks or processes that need to be performed. This is also why I have situated the fuzzy circle with the T in it to the side of the other two circles. If we are functioning in the here-and-now, it is our Adult that is presented mainly to the world, with our Parent store of role models and our Child store of our own emotional and psychological experiences that are available as resources.

Of course, we could also draw these fuzzy circles with overlaps to represent problematic contaminations, and we could draw any one of them with solid lines to indicate exclusion. This could represent groups and organisations where the Etiquette may be so heavy that no displays of Character are allowed or where the Technical processes are out-of-date and do not reflect the current situation. It could also be done to represent groups and organisations where the Character is out of control, so that the Etiquette no longer seems to exist, and again where the Technical processes are not relevant to the current situation because those involved are only doing what they feel like doing. There are of course many groups and organisations where it is the Technical, or Today, that is being excluded and which are operating on the basis of a conflict between Etiquette and Character, with the high level of excitement that

accompanies a high level of psychological game playing.

Groups

We can incorporate the ETC diagrams of individuals into the TA concept of group imagoes (Berne 1963; Hay 2009) as shown in Figure 3.

Please note that in the diagram I have used a dashed line for the imago. This is done to indicate that this diagram is 'only' a psychological image held by group members. Dashed lines are usually used to represent healthy boundaries in TA diagrams (Hay 2018). An individual member may have an image of an unhealthy boundary for the group, either as a dotted line which represents boundaries that are too porous, or a solid line which represents a boundary that prevents movement into or out of the group.

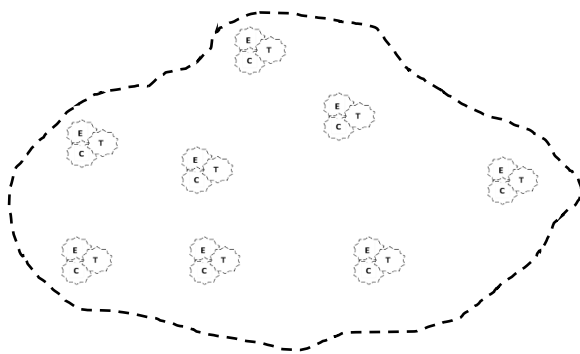


Figure 3: ETCs and Group Imagoes

During the early stages of group formation, there are likely to be several individuals with several different Etiquettes, Characters and even different perspectives on the 'technical' requirements for Today. As they get to know each other, at least at a psychological level, they will begin to recognise what they have in common. We really need a moving diagram to illustrate this process. Those with similar Etiquettes may be drawn together whilst those with similar preferences about Character may also be drawn together. Those with similar 'Today' perspectives may be puzzled why the others are not willing to address the tasks of the group in a straightforward, logical manner.

If we are working with the group, we might invite them to sketch out their own imagoes

and to include within those the relative sizes of the different elements of each person. We can easily imagine that some will have 'larger' Parent, Child or Adult ego states and therefore more significant dynamics about Etiquette, Character or Today. This might explain why some become:

- leaders – Parent if controlling or nurturing, Adult if genuinely democratic.
- followers – Child if adapted, submissive, rebellious or withdrawn, Adult if they recognise that someone else will be a more effective leader than they would.
- technical 'experts' but not leaders or followers because they are the most up-to-date members of the group in terms of today's requirements for undertaking the tasks of the group.

These might be illustrated as shown in Figure 4.

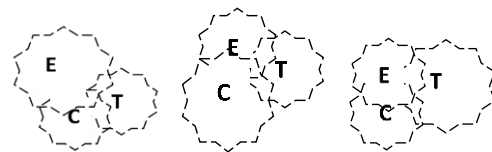


Figure 4: Individuals with unbalanced ETC

In later stages of group formation, and especially in groups that have been running for some time, it might well be that the imagoes now have a hierarchy within them. The 'pecking order' may be represented by a diagram in which the leader and those close to the leader are shown at the top of the imago and have larger Etiquettes compared to the size of the Character and Today. Some of the followers might then be shown nearer the bottom of the imago, with a larger Character, and possibly even distinguished by whether that is seen by the leaders as positive (not too much Character) or negative, with considerable Character that is directly opposing the group Etiquette set by the others.

It is likely that in groups such as this, those who may have a larger Today may simply be seen by the others as another form of negative Character. This is particularly likely if the leaders setting the Etiquette for the group

believe, inaccurately, that they have a better awareness of what is needed in terms of undertaking the group tasks, or if they are more interested in maintaining the group in its current form than they are in completing the tasks.

An alternative way of showing a group could be based on Berne's (1963) core structural diagram, as shown in Figure 5. In this the leadership are shown as setting the Etiquette, with some of the members of the group following that Etiquette and some of them displaying Character with varying degrees of rebellion against the Etiquette. In an unhealthy group, those attempting to operate on the basis of Today may exist only as occasional disconnected individuals.

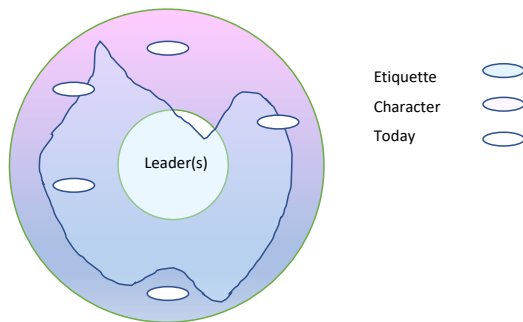


Figure 5: ETC applied to Group Structure

Organisations

WE can apply the ETC idea to organisations in the same ways as for groups.

First, we can imagine an organisation as being a collection of groups with their own ETCs. Using a typical triangle shape to reflect that many organisations are hierarchical, this might look as shown in Figure 6. Each of the group imagoes represents a team of people. Some of those groups will be effective teams with healthy imagoes and some may have very unhealthy imagoes. This representation could be overlaid onto a normal organisation chart, based on how team members see their own groups or on how the managers, and the senior managers, perceive the teams.

Alternatively, we could shade in the organisation, using whichever shape seems appropriate, in the same way that Figure 5 has been done for a group.

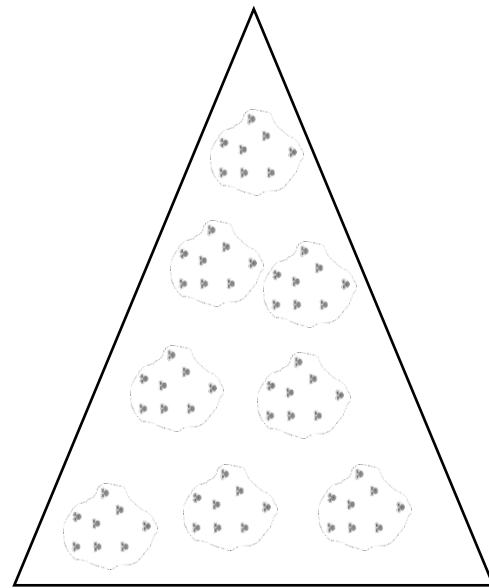


Figure 6: An organisation comprised of imagoes of groups of individual ETCs.

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Institute of Developmental Transactional Analysis, Wildhill, Broadoak End, Hertford, SG14 2JA

www.instdta.org

email: admin@instdta.org
