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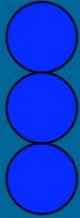


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## Volume 12 Issue 1 July 2021

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## Editorial

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Who would have thought so many of us would still be in lockdown - but on the principle that every cloud has a silver lining, it has meant that our authors have been busy providing us material for this issue.

We begin with the Game Grid – a new idea, albeit one that the author has been working with for many years. When I heard Steve Lankton presenting this at a conference a couple of years ago, I knew it would be great to introduce it to a wider audience. For those of you who may not know Steve, his connections with TA go back many years. His Game Grid lets us link game playing to the OK Corral, using as the basis Steve's own development of an early Interpersonal Check List published by Leary (again many years ago). It just goes to show that really useful ideas stay useful.

Steve has done a great job of explaining how to use the ideas and has kindly provided the materials in a way that everyone can reproduce them and use them with clients – and they are also available online in several other languages.

Our next article is also from someone who has been within the TA scene for a long time – Tony White. Tony introduces us to ideas about suicide contagion, suicide clusters, suicide pacts – how is it that people are prompted to commit suicide because other people are doing so or have done so. Tony also alerts us to the risks that the ways we talk and write about suicide within our professional activities might be inadvertently conveying a permission to clients to commit suicide.

This is followed by another article by Piotr Jusik, who has previously written about strokes, games and learning in groups, as well as about counselling within educational settings. This time he addresses passivity within the educational environment. He provides us with information about several research studies and several case studies, complete with suggestions of how the overadaptation within the educational environment might be resolved.

Next we have an article about triology. Ranjith tells us how we can combine Fr George Kandathil's meta-theory combining I, You and Goals and the creation of Relationship, Identity and Rationality, with TA ideas about injunctions, injunctive messages and permissions. Ranjith also links this material to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and provides a case study to illustrate how practitioner and client can use this together to explore childhood experiences.

Having begun this issue with an article about the Game Grid, the final article in this issue introduces a potential new game called TAMED – the TA Myth of Explanatory Depth. Proposed by me, I illustrate this with examples of dynamics that I have experienced within the TA community, including the cancellation of the World TA Conference 2020, and the events that led up to this journal no longer being supported by EATA. I consider the nature of bystanders within professional associations and go on to suggest a model for considering the structure and dynamics of bodies which are theoretically run by their members.

So a wide-ranging issue – a new model called the Game Grid from an author in the USA, material about suicide contagion from an author in Australia, thoughts on passivity within education from a Polish author who is in Guatemala, triology linked to Maslow's hierarchy of needs from an author in India, and a game name related to the dynamics of professional associations from an author in the UK.

*A postscript* – great news about Roland Johnsson's research that he published in this journal in 2010 and 2011. The doctoral dissertation on which the articles were based has become the most read dissertation at Lund University in Sweden. Roland estimates that it has been read 38,000 times. His 2011 article in IJTARP has also been accessed nearly 3500 times. Well done Roland!



## The Game Grid

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### Abstract

The author presents his own design of a Game Grid which can be overlaid on the original version of the circumplex attributed to Leary (1957). The original Interpersonal Check List (ICL) and associated axes and domains (sections) are retained as the purpose is to prompt individuals to explore their own behaviours and how these link to their life positions and the psychological games they may play. A short history of the ICL used is followed by the introduction of a modified OK Corral which recognises that there are some 'good' games, and a selection of psychological games is allocated to line up with the four major life positions. Appendices contain the materials, with links to other languages, and detailed instructions which will allow practitioners to apply the approach described. The author concludes with examples of how results may be interpreted and used to help individual clients and partners.

### Key Words.

life positions, psychological games, OK Corral, Interpersonal Check List (ICL), game grid, circumplex,

### Introduction

Many years ago (mid-1950s) an Interpersonal Check List (ICL) was developed, based on extensive research, and intended to assist in the classification of individuals into forms of psychiatric diagnoses. Since then, there have been several iterations of it, although the application described in this paper is based on an early version.

Within transactional analysis, Berne (1964) introduced the concept of psychological games and named many examples. He also introduced the notion of life positions (Berne 1962), which was subsequently developed into the OK Corral (Ernst 1971) as a way to illustrate four positions.

This paper describes how these initiatives have been further developed and combined to produce a process

through which clients can be helped to identify the time spent by them in the various life positions, and the corresponding psychological games they 'play'.

### Interpersonal Check List

The version of the ICL used as the basis for the Game Grid (IGG) described in this paper is the version published by Leary (1957). This book included a chapter which was credited as a reproduction with permission of a paper by LaForge and Suczek (1955). It was released by them as the Interpersonal Adjective Check List, as a measuring device for interpersonal behaviour. It is interesting to look back and see that it was already being administered 'technologically', albeit that it involved individuals sorting out cards into true or false piles, and these then being used as IBM punched cards (and described in a separate, unpublished paper by LaForge 1954).

Since then there have been many developments, including re-ordering the items, changing them to ensure even coverage of the domains that constitute the model, re-conceptualising the axes, and producing different instruments such as the Interpersonal Adjective Scales (IAS: Wiggins 1995), the Check List of Interpersonal Transactions (CLOIT: Kiesler, Goldston and Schmidt 1991) and the Support Actions Scale – Circumflex (SAS-C: Trobst, 2000).

When the original ICL was developed, there was a study with 30,000 subjects and it was found to correlate with the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) (Hathaway and McKinley 1940) although the MMPI has gone through several updates beginning in 1989. It also correlated with the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) (American Psychiatric Association 1952) although that too has now gone through several updated iterations.

Those correlations were many years ago, and various norm tables have been produced using the subsequent iterations. However, norm tables were

produced so that people could be compared in terms of their mental health. For the use described in this article, the focus is on *individual differences*. Use with clients has demonstrated that the 128 adjectival phrases lead to a self-report that will be recognised by clients as representative of their own self-image.

Scoring the version of ICL being presented here results in a circle graph as shown in Figure 1. The axes for these are Dominant versus Submissive and Affiliated/Friendly versus Disaffiliative/Hostile. There are eight domains: Managerial, Socially-Responsive, Cooperative, Dependent or Provoking Assistance, Self-Effacing, Rebellious or Provoking Hostile Rejection, Aggressive, and Competitive.

Scores result in shadings within the various domains, presenting a picture of how intensely each of the areas applies. Figure 2 shows several illustrations of how these might look for different clients.

### Life Positions

Ernst (1971) produced the OK Corral as a visual representation of the four positions that had been written about by Berne (1962). He presented them using a vertical axis which refers to whether the other person is OK or not and a horizontal axis about whether the self is OK or not. He also focused on it representing social dynamics rather than Berne's original existential position, commenting that:

"1. There are dynamic operations going on in the

person which can bring about a chosen resolution for himself, his inside view, *and* his view of the particular companion in each encounter.

2. There is a net outcome or resultant (measure) of the event by this person at the conclusion of the event." (p. 33).

You will see later that this author has rotated the original axes so that the self-dimension becomes vertical and the other-person-dimension is now horizontal. This allows us to transpose it over the top of the ICL chart and correlate the understanding of the two conceptualizations.

A further modification is made in that a circle is cropped in the middle and included as part of the I'm OK, You're OK box, as shown in Figure 3. This is because it is healthy rather than psychologically gamy to be Disaffiliative or Submissive to varying degrees in some circumstances.

### Psychological Games

Berne (1964) defined a game as "an ongoing series of complementary ulterior transactions, progressing to a well-defined predictable outcome" (p. 48). In that book he also wrote of what he referred to as 'good' games, although we might nowadays believe that these are more like pastimes because they do not include the switch or payoff which he added in his game formula (Berne 1972). They therefore appear within this model as within the OK-OK sector of the chart.

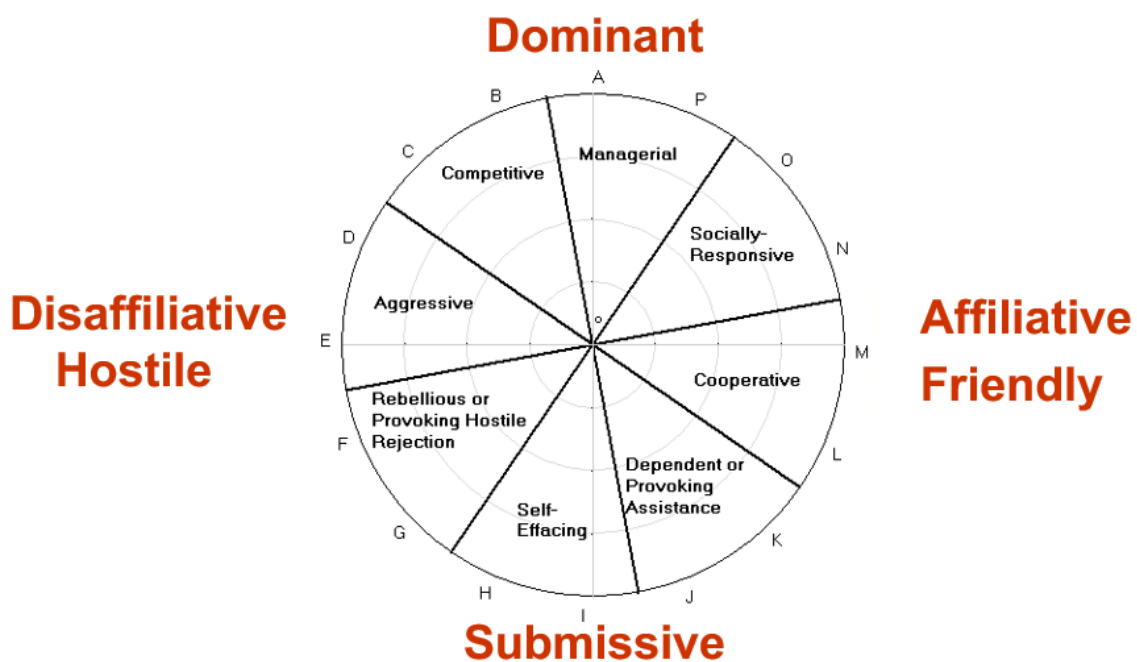


Figure 1: Interpersonal Check List Chart showing Axes and Domains

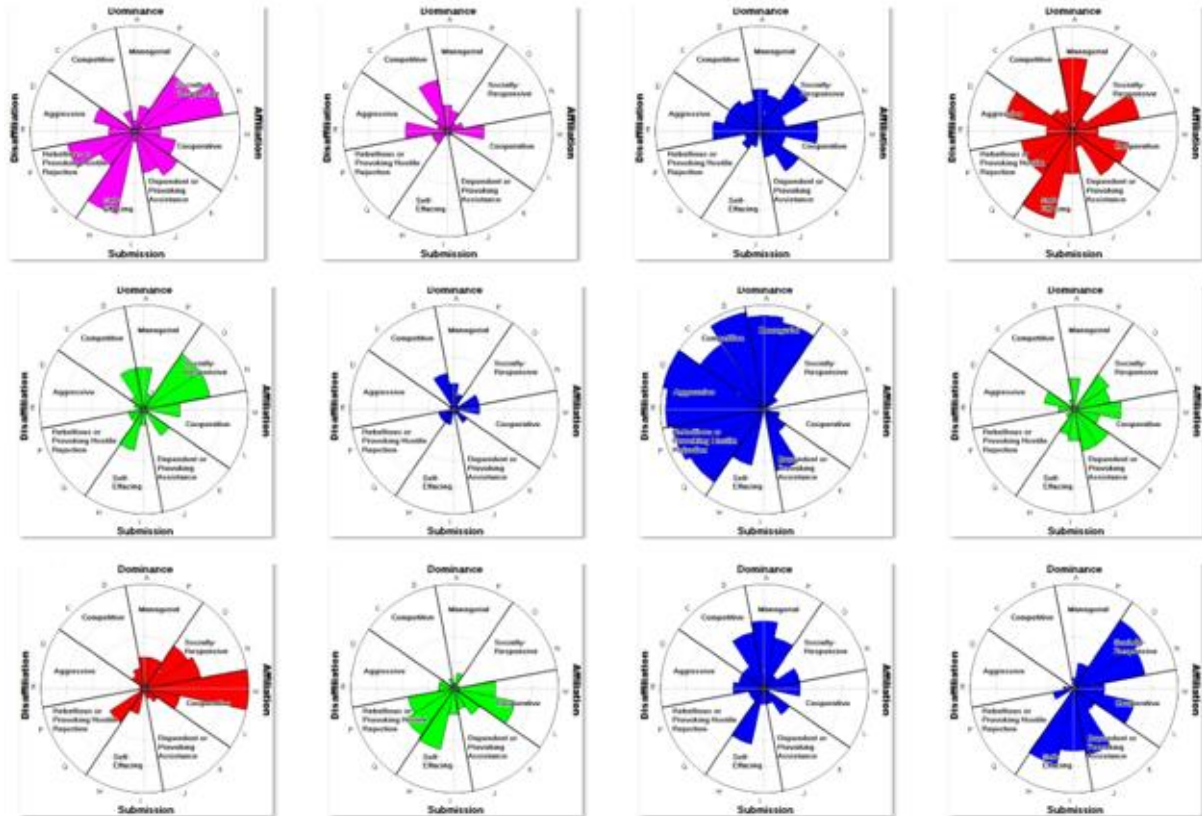


Figure 2: Thumbnail Illustrations of several Client ICL Charts

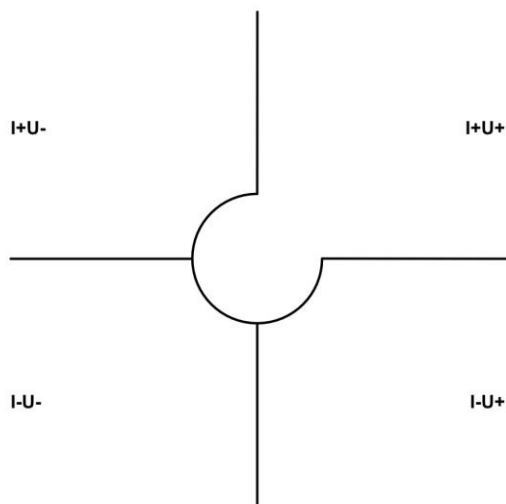


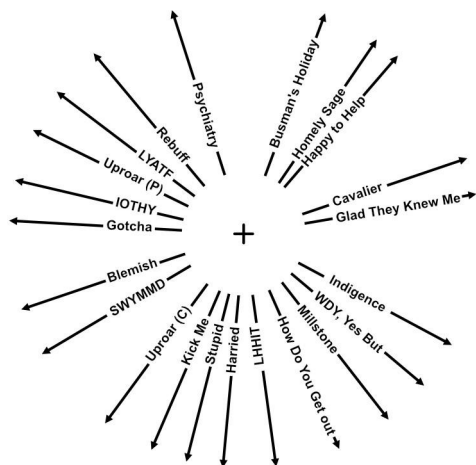
Figure 3: Modified OK Corral

Berne (1964) also wrote that "The most likely candidate of a systematic, scientific classification is probably one based on the existential position; but since knowledge of this factor is not yet sufficiently advanced, such a classification will have to be postponed. Failing that, the most practical classification at present is probably a sociological

one." (p. 64). The GG is presented to begin doing just that – relating games to existential positions.

The Game Grid has been based on the behaviour and existential positions and includes a number of game names that I found to be most common with clients. There may of course be others that could be added. It does not of course incorporate ulterior behaviours such as voice tones or micro muscle movements which are usually unconscious. Clients will respond to the prompts from behaviours initiated from the various adjectival positions in terms of the using behaviour of which they are consciously aware. However, identification of the games being played will allow the client and practitioner to discuss the unconscious dynamics so that clients may become aware of them also.

*Editor's Note: Berne used metaphorical names for games and some of these have become unacceptable nowadays. The author has therefore agreed that his material be amended so that NIGYSOB is renamed as Gotcha (Hay 1993), Wooden Leg becomes Millstone (Hay 1995), and Rapo, which he had renamed as Buzz off Buster becomes Rebuff (Hay 1993). We have also changed 'Let's you and him fight' to 'you and them' to avoid associating this game with one gender only.*



**Figure 4: The Game Grid Overlay**  
(shown larger in Appendix C)

For the benefit of those not familiar with the abbreviations used in the Game Grid: LYAHF is Lets You And Him Fight; IOTHY – I'm Only Trying To Help You; SWYMMMD is See What You Made Me Do; LHHIT - Look How Hard I Tried; WDY is Why Don't You which is the other end of Yes But.

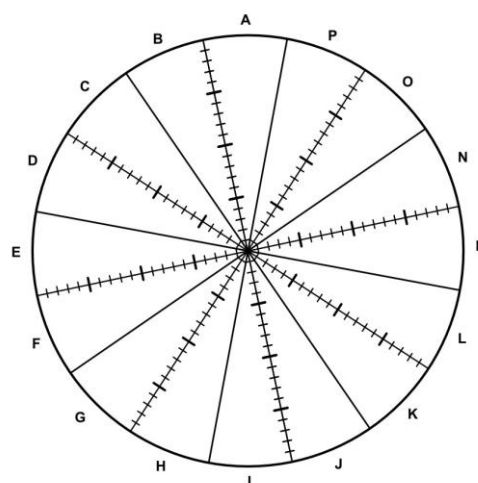
### Combining ICL, Life Positions and Psychological Games

The process begins when the client completes the ICL, which is included as Appendix A. For each checkmark there is a weighted score to the left of the item. The weighted scores are then transferred onto the Scoring Sheet. These scores are then transferred into the circular chart shown in Figure 5, where the centre is zero, each hatch line represents one and the darker hatch lines represent five. Finally, the chart is shaded in line with the scores. This process is described in more detail in Appendix B; there is also an electronic version available, and the questionnaire has been translated into several languages – details are given in the Appendix.

In addition to the questionnaire, the practitioner needs to produce overlays from the modified OK Corral and from the Game Grid. These can be easily produced by printing the appropriate Figures onto overhead transparency acetates. The diagrams necessary to do this in corresponding sizes are included in Appendix C.

The modified OK Corral overlay is then put across the completed and shaded chart and the practitioner and the client can review what this illustrates in terms of the proportions of time spent by the client in the various life positions. This discussion can also include consideration of the meaning of the various domains.

Finally, the overlay of the GG can be added so that the client can become more aware of the games they are



**Figure 5: ICL Chart**

playing, and how these will be the ways in which they have learned to behave in order to give and receive strokes and solve problems. It is of course possible to do this with two clients who are in relationship with each other. They might score for themselves and they might also score for each other.

### Interpreting the Results

We can of course discuss with the client what the various domains represent, and explore the behavioural items they have checked. The underlying pattern may be seen when looking at the shadings of the various domains. For instance, a person may score high in P but not in A, even though both of these represent Managerial behaviour. They may also score high in N but not in O, even though both of these represent Socially Responsive behaviour. We might help the client to interpret that as meaning that they are willing to be managerial and responsive *as long as* they are not seen as being too domineering. A and O are more dominant forms of the managerial and socially responsive domains respectively. From a game perspective, this may mean that the individual's gimmick (Berne, 1966) is "I want to be in charge and helpful as long as you don't think I'm taking over." This would appear to be the individual's Achilles' heel, and would be worth exploring more carefully so the client can become aware of whether this is about not wanting to make people angry, or of being rejected by others, or of some other fear.

We might also review with the client where the major blocks of behavioural grouping are appearing, especially as they are likely to be contributing to failure to solve problems or get positive strokes. Noting which behaviours are being avoided may represent the impact of injunctions (Goulding and Goulding 1976) and the existing behaviours may comprise the substitute, or racket behaviours (English 1971, 1972).

Note that some clients will not use the hostile behaviours that show up on the chart. Although they may have been checked on the questionnaire, the behaviours may be dormant in the current life context because those behaviours were learned in a previous, earlier environment and are no longer needed for obtaining strokes, or the client may have enough social control to avoid using them.

When the modified OK-Corral is overlaid on the chart, it shows that some clients will spend a percentage of time in different life positions rather than spending all of their time in one position. English (1971, 1972) posited that people may occupy more than one existential position, with one defensively covering another. In Figure 2 you can see there are a wide range of results that are possible. Hence, an individual may primarily get strokes from the OK-OK life position but play other games from a different position or positions.

When we overlay the Game Grid, we can link the games to the life positions they are played to reinforce. The grid includes my personal classification so the reader may wish to change these and to add more games. I have already explained that I have included some of Berne's 'good' games in the I'm OK, You're OK quadrant.

Continuing around the circle:

- I'm not OK, You're OK: the games here are Indigence; Why Don't You, Yes But; Millstone; How do you get out of here; and Look how hard I tried. Some are more submissive and are therefore closer to the bottom of the chart whilst others are friendlier and are closer to the right-hand side.
- I'm not OK, You're not OK: this quadrant has more submissive games in lower positions, such as Harried; Stupid; Kick me. The more hostile games are further up, including Uproar; See what you made me do; and Blemish.
- I'm OK, You're not OK: this final top left quadrant contains behaviours for hostile-dominant behaviours so the games include Gotcha; I'm only trying to help you; Uproar; Let's you and them fight; Rebuff; and Psychiatry.

My placement of some of the games on the grid might be disputed. Berne and Stuntz (1971) both classified Kick Me as I'm not OK, although neither of them specified the 'You're' position. It might therefore be placed in both the bottom left and bottom right of the Grid – it is clearly Submissive but might be Affiliative or Disaffiliative. I have opted to place it just inside the bottom left to avoid visual clutter. Also, I have included Uproar twice because it can be played from the position of a dominant Parent ego state or a

submissive Rebellious Child ego state. Sometimes an individual will alternate between both of these positions.

It might be argued that the information generated through this method is a self-report and therefore unreliable. In my clinical practice since 1974, I have rarely seen any form of deliberate deception. Clients have voluntarily come for help and will therefore do their best to provide accurate information. Since this self-report is a client's self-image, occasionally it can be inaccurate or distorted. It can sometimes be useful to have someone else score the client as well. When working with clients who are partners, it can be useful for them to score themselves and to also score their partner. In that way, the review can cover their perceptions of each other as well as how their patterns may or may not reinforce each other.

## Conclusions

I first conceived the Game Grid and developed it in the early 1980s, using a paper version. I am delighted that technology now allows us to distribute it to a wider audience, both through this journal and through the website mentioned in Appendix B.

I have been teaching the use of it in workshops for many years as well as using it with all of my clients. Because the ICL is the client's own self-report, the existence of the behaviours indicated in each section provide a bridge to increase their awareness of their life positions and the games they are playing. It is much easier to gain the clients acceptance and recognition when it is based on their own self-report. The results can also be linked easily to their stroke-seeking behaviour, and it forms a helpful step in involving their Adult ego state in the process of their own development.

**Stephen Lankton**, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Diplomate American Hypnosis Board, Fellow American Society of Clinical Hypnosis, is an Emeritus Clinical Member of ITAA due to having been involved with TA for so many years. He can be contacted on [steve@lankton.com](mailto:steve@lankton.com).

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## Appendix A: The Interpersonal Check List

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Place a check mark  by the phrases which describe or apply to you, whether you engage in the behaviour frequently or only occasionally.

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1A ___ 1. Able to give orders             | 4P ___ 43. Expects everyone to admire him  | 3F ___ 88. Resentful                         |
| 1K ___ 2. Appreciative                    | 2G ___ 44. Frequently disappointed         | 2P ___ 89. Respected by others               |
| 2H ___ 3. Apologetic                      | 2D ___ 45. Firm but just                   | 4F ___ 90. Rebels against every thing        |
| 1C ___ 4. Able to take care of self       | 3M ___ 46. Fond of everyone                | 2F ___ 91. Resents being bossed              |
| 2K ___ 5. Accepts advice readily          | 2A ___ 47. Forceful                        | 2B ___ 92. Self-reliant & assertive          |
| 1G ___ 6. Able to doubt others            | 1M ___ 48. Friendly                        | 3D ___ 93. Sarcastic                         |
| 2M ___ 7. Affectionate & understanding    | 3N ___ 49. Forgives anything               | 3H ___ 94. Self-punishing                    |
| 3P ___ 8. Acts important                  | 3E ___ 50. Frequently angry                | 2B ___ 95. Self-confident                    |
| 1H ___ 9. Able to criticize self          | 3M ___ 51. Friendly all the time           | 3D ___ 96. Self-seeking                      |
| 2J ___ 10. Admires & imitates others      | 3O ___ 52. Generous to a fault             | 3C ___ 97. Shrewd & calculating              |
| 4L ___ 11. Agrees with everyone           | 2O ___ 53. Gives freely of self            | 1B ___ 98. Self-respecting                   |
| 4H ___ 12. Always ashamed of self         | 2A ___ 54. Good leader                     | 3H ___ 99. Shy                               |
| 2K ___ 13. Very anxious to be proved of   | 1J ___ 55. Grateful                        | 3C ___ 100. Selfish                          |
| 3P ___ 14. Always giving advice           | 2D ___ 56. Hard boiled when necessary      | 2F ___ 101. Skeptical                        |
| 3F ___ 15. Bitter                         | 1O ___ 57. Helpful                         | 2M ___ 102. Sociable & neighborly            |
| 2O ___ 16. Big hearted & unselfish        | 4E ___ 58. Hard-hearted                    | 3G ___ 103. Slow to forgive a wrong          |
| 3B ___ 17. Boastful                       | 2G ___ 59. Hard to impress                 | 3B ___ 104. Somewhat snobbish                |
| 2C ___ 18. Businesslike                   | 3D ___ 60. Impatient with other's mistakes | 4I ___ 105. Spineless                        |
| 3A ___ 19. Bossy                          | 2B ___ 61. Independent                     | 2D ___ 106. Stern but fair                   |
| 1E ___ 20. Can be frank & honest          | 2E ___ 62. Irritable                       | 4O ___ 107. Spoils people with kindness      |
| 4J ___ 21. Clinging vine                  | 3G ___ 63. Jealous                         | 2E ___ 108. Straightforward & direct         |
| 1D ___ 22. Can be strict if necessary     | 2N ___ 64. Kind & reassuring               | 3G ___ 109. Stubborn                         |
| 1N ___ 23. Considerate                    | 2A ___ 65. Likes responsibility            | 3L ___ 110. Too easily influenced by friends |
| 4C ___ 24. Cold and unfeeling             | 2H ___ 66. Lacks self-confidence           | 3C ___ 111. Thinks only of self              |
| 1F ___ 25. Can complain if necessary      | 2C ___ 67. Likes to compete with others    | 2N ___ 112. Tender & soft hearted            |
| 1L ___ 26. Cooperative                    | 3K ___ 68. Lets others make decisions      | 3H ___ 113. Timid                            |
| 3F ___ 27. Complaining                    | 3M ___ 69. Likes everybody                 | 3N ___ 114. Too lenient with others          |
| 2C ___ 28. Can be indifferent to others   | 3K ___ 70. Likes to be taken care of       | 2G ___ 115. Touchy & easily hurt             |
| 2E ___ 29. Critical of others             | 4M ___ 71. Loves everybody                 | 3O ___ 116. Too willing to give to others    |
| 1I ___ 30. Can be obedient                | 2P ___ 72. Makes a good impression         | 3P ___ 117. Tries to be too successful       |
| 4D ___ 31. Cruel and unkind               | 3A ___ 73. Manages others                  | 2K ___ 118. Trusting & eager to please       |
| 3J ___ 32. Dependent                      | 3I ___ 74. Meek                            | 4N ___ 119. Tries to comfort every one       |
| 4A ___ 33. Dictatorial                    | 2I ___ 75. Modest                          | 2I ___ 120. Usually gives in                 |
| 4G ___ 34. Distrusts everybody            | 3J ___ 76. Hardly ever talks back          | 2J ___ 121. Very respectful to authority     |
| 3A ___ 35. Dominating                     | 2P ___ 77. Often admired                   | 3L ___ 122. Wants everyone's love            |
| 2H ___ 36. Easily embarrassed             | 3I ___ 78. Obeys too willingly             | 1P ___ 123. Well thought of                  |
| 2L ___ 37. Eager to get along with others | 2F ___ 79. Often gloomy                    | 3J ___ 124. Wants to be led                  |
| 3K ___ 38. Easily fooled                  | 3E ___ 80. Outspoken                       | 3L ___ 125. Will confide in anyone           |
| 4B ___ 39. Egotistical & conceited        | 3O ___ 81. Overprotective of others        | 2M ___ 126. Warm                             |
| 2I ___ 40. Easily led                     | 3E ___ 82. Often unfriendly                | 2L ___ 127. Wants everyone to like him       |
| 2N ___ 41. Encouraging to others          | 3N ___ 83. Over-sympathetic                | 4K ___ 128. Will believe anyone              |
| 2O ___ 42. Enjoys taking care of others   | 2J ___ 84. Often helped by others          |  |
|   | 3I ___ 85. Passive & unaggressive          |  |
|   | 3B ___ 86. Proud & self-satisfied          |  |
|   | 2L ___ 87. Always pleasant and agreeable   |  |

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## Appendix B: Scoring the ICL

There is an electronic version for administration and scoring of the ICL. This program is free-of-charge. It was written by Dr. Shawn Lankton, Ph.D., and can be downloaded from: <https://lankton.com/icl.zip>. The executable file found within the ZIP file is compatible with all versions of Windows (32 or 64-bit architecture). All necessary instructions are included. There may be one additional short installation step necessary for some users -- which is clearly explained. In addition, there are several paper versions included in the ZIP file (the Check List is available now in English, French, Czech, German, Japanese, Portuguese, and Spanish).

The following describes the process of scoring the paper version, and also explains the graphing process so that those who are not using the electronic version understand how to administer it.

When completed, the entire scoring sheet will look like the following diagram. Each weighted score to the left of each item consists of the numbers 1 through 4 and the alphabetical character A through P.

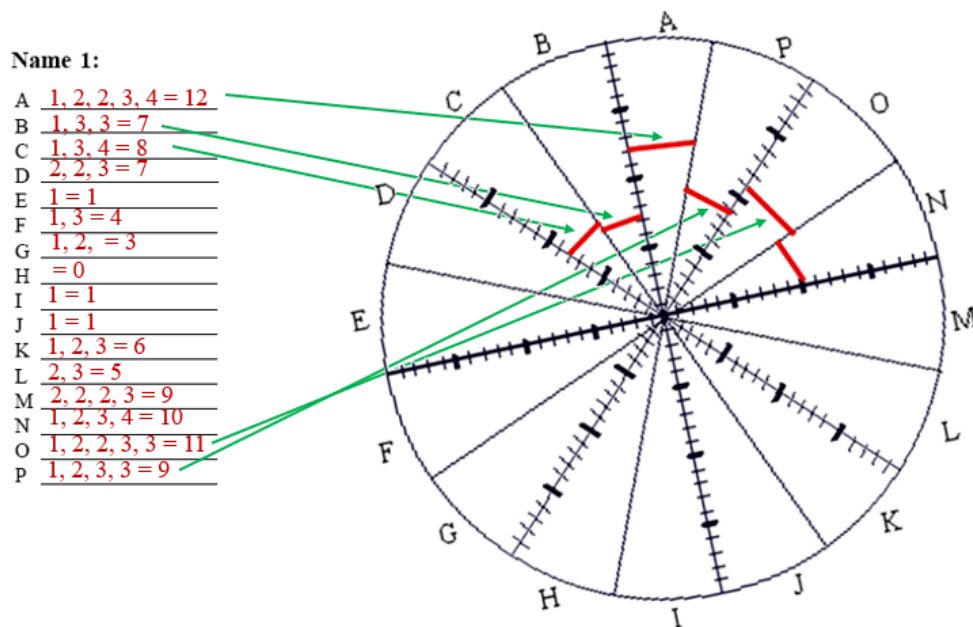
1A ✓	1.	Able to give orders	2G	44.	admire him/her	2F	91.	Resents being bossed
1K	2.	Appreciative	2D ✓	45.	Firm but just	2B	92.	Self-reliant & asser- tive
2H	3.	Apologetic	3M	46.	Fond of everyone	3D	93.	Sarcastic
1C	4.	Able to take care of self	2A	47.	Forceful	3H	94.	Self-punishing
2K	5.	Accepts advice readily	1M ✓	48.	Friendly	2B	95.	Self-confident
1G	6.	Able to doubt others	3N	49.	Forgives anything	3D	96.	Self-seeking
2M ✓	7.	Affectionate & under standing	3E	50.	Frequently angry	3C	97.	Shrewd & calculating
3P	8.	Acts important	3M	51.	Friendly all the time	1B	98.	Self-respecting
1H	9.	Able to criticize self	3O	52.	Generous to a fault	3H	99.	Shy
2J	10.	Admires & imitates others	2O	53.	Gives freely of self	3C	100.	Selfish
4L	11.	Agrees with everyone	2A	54.	Good leader	2F	101.	Skeptical
4H	12.	Always ashamed of self	1J	55.	Grateful	2M	102.	Sociable & neigh- borly
2K	13.	Very anxious to be approved of	2D	56.	Hard boiled when necessary	3G	103.	Slow to forgive a wrong
3P	14.	Always giving advice	1O ✓	57.	Helpful	3B	104.	Somewhat snobbish
3F	15.	Bitter	4E	58.	Hard-hearted	4I	105.	Spineless
2O	16.	Big hearted & unsel-	2G	59.	Hard to impress	2D	106.	Stern but fair
			3D	60.	Impatient with other's mistakes	4O	107.	Spoils people with kindness
			2B	61.	Independent			

The *weighted* scores (1 thru 4) are transferred to the appropriate line in the columns shown in the following illustration. The column has individual lines for letters A-P. So, if a score shows as 1A, 1 should be placed on the line for A. In the limited example shown below, the hypothetical person A1, 2D, 1O, and both 2M and 1M. Those five items are recorded in the lines of the first column on the scoresheet shown below.

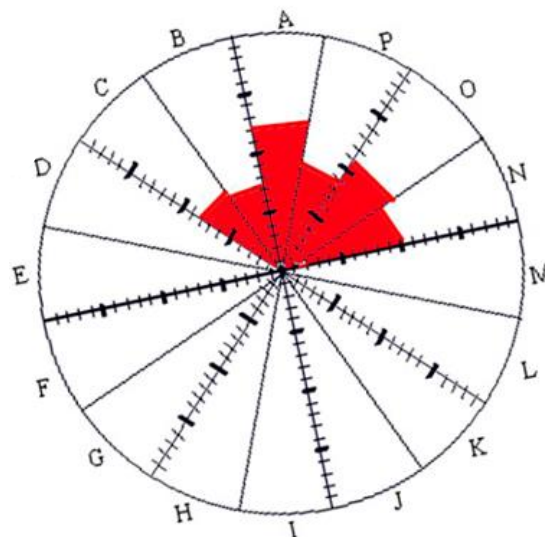
A	1	_____
B		_____
C		_____
D	2	_____
E		_____
F		_____
G		_____
H		_____
I		_____
J		_____
K		_____
L		_____
M	2, 1 = 3	_____
N		_____
O	1	_____
P		_____

The weighted scores on each line are then added together and this *total* score is transferred onto the circular graph, in which the centre is zero and each line represents a score of 1, with the more prominent lines representing a score of 5.

The example below is based on a completed checklist for a hypothetical client. Each line has been totalled and that total is indicated in the circular chart at the appropriate point. Note that the image depicts a bar across each corresponding segment.

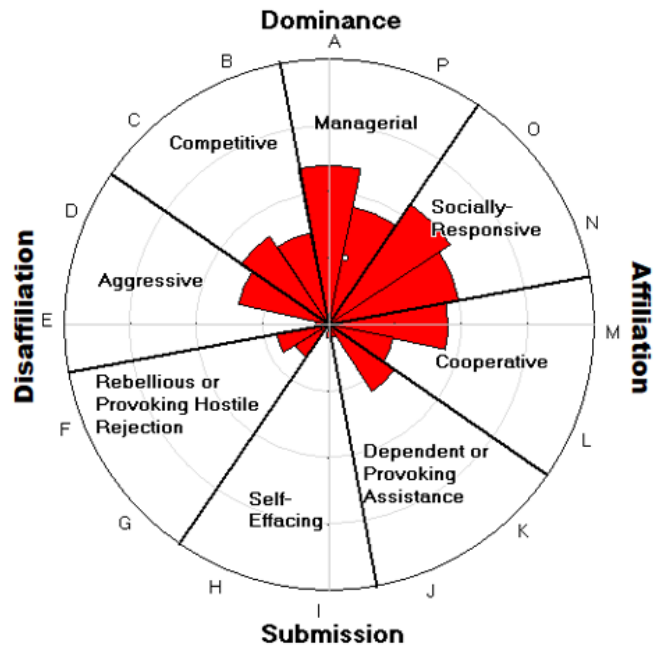


The various segments or domains can then be shaded in so that it is easier to see the pattern, as shown below. This creates a circular bar-graph. Each segment is a bar rising from the centre point of the circle.

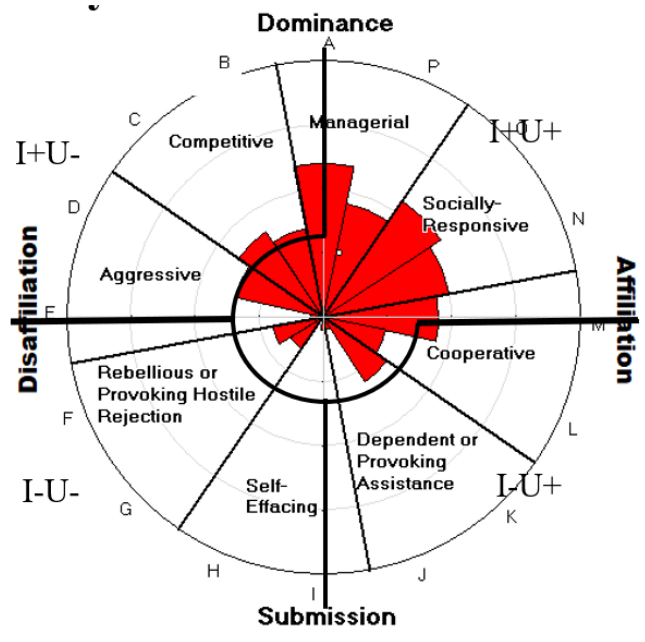


It will be seen that this chart would represent a person whose self-report shows that most of their behaviours are dominant, and much of their behaviour is affiliative, e.g., friendly.

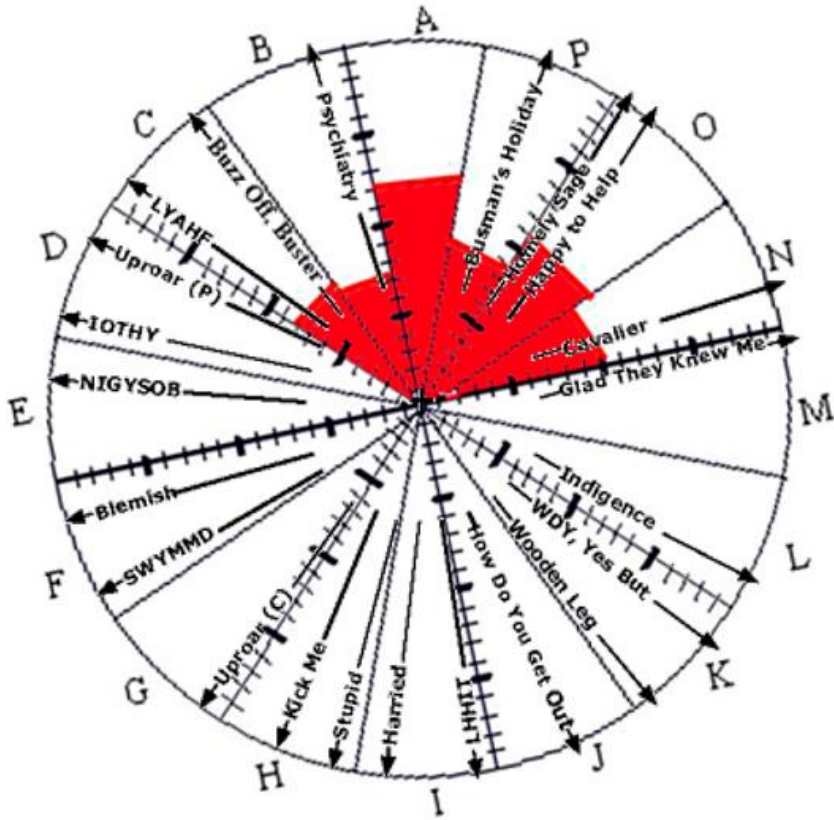
Another example is shown below to illustrate how this can then be shown to the client in a way that includes the axes and the domains.



This can then be overlaid with the modified OK Corral diagram, as follows.

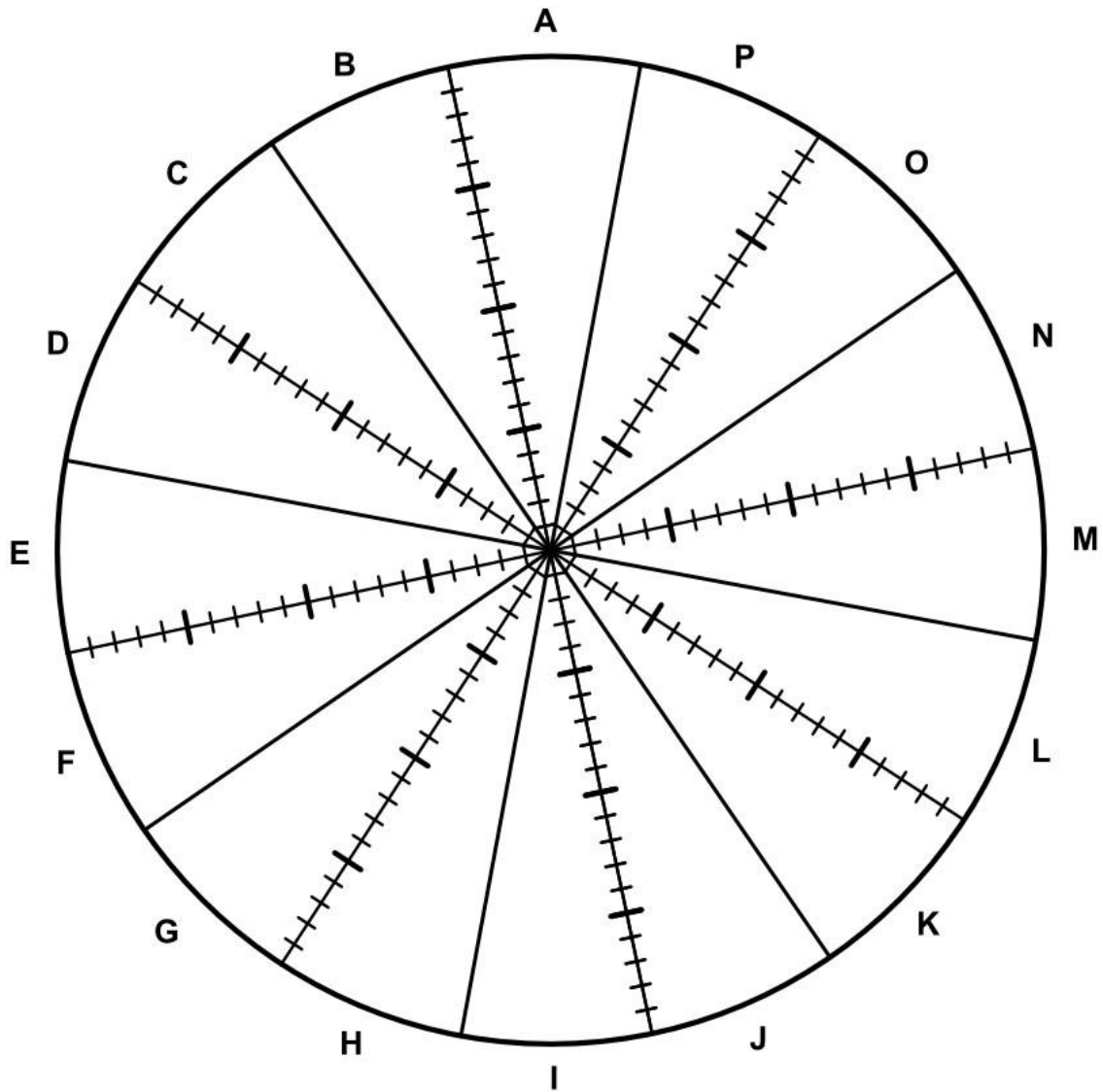


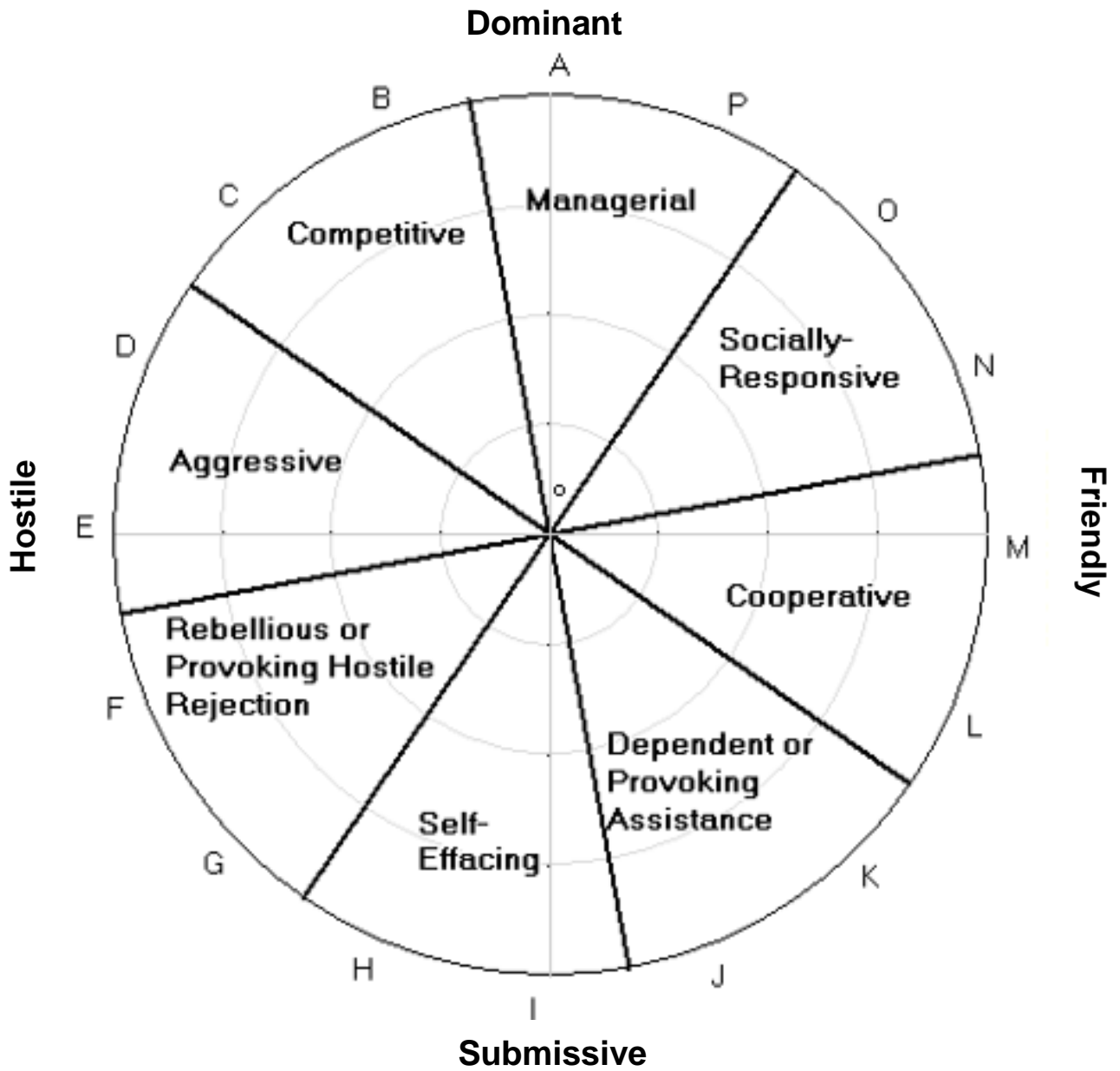
From the above example it can be concluded that the subject the graph represents is likely to primarily transact from an I'm Ok, You're OK life position.



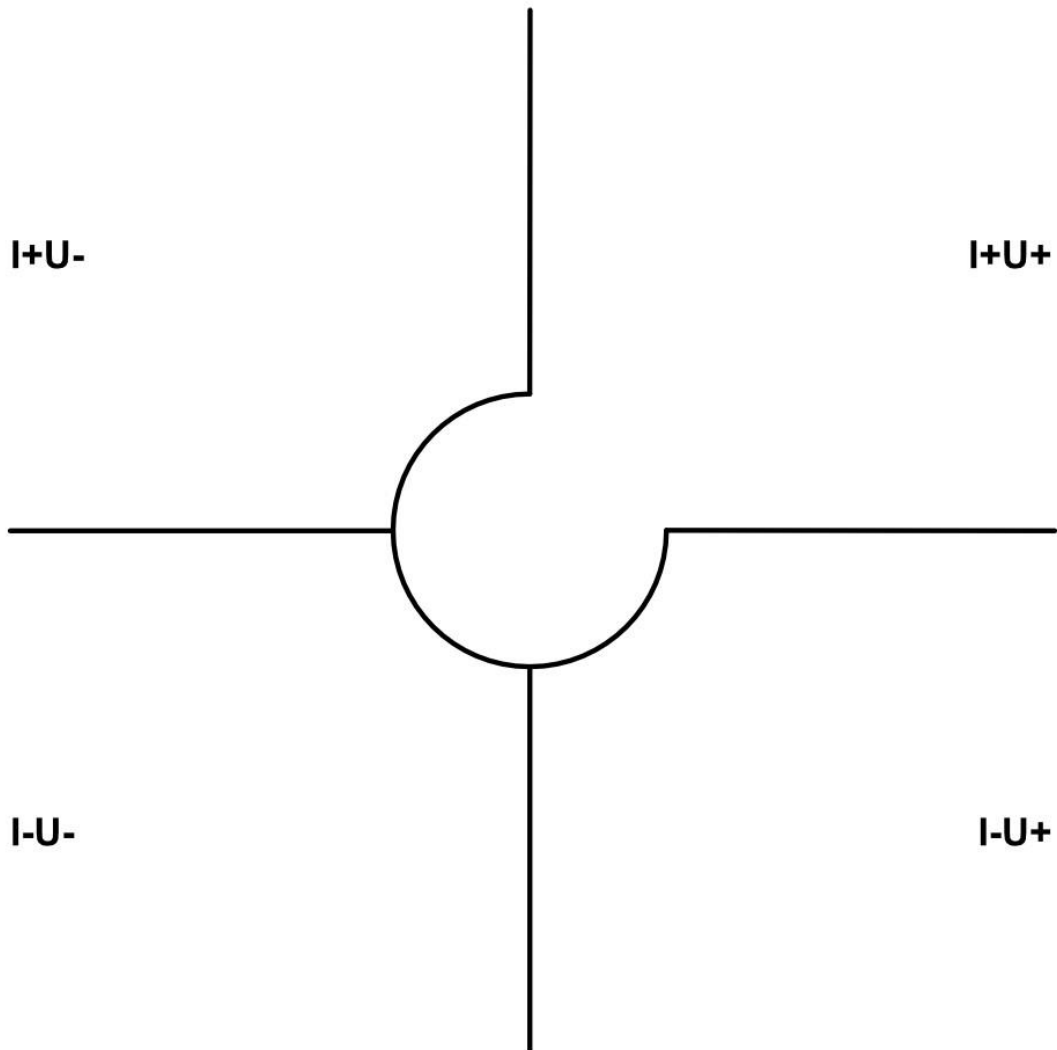
## Appendix C: Diagrams to print out

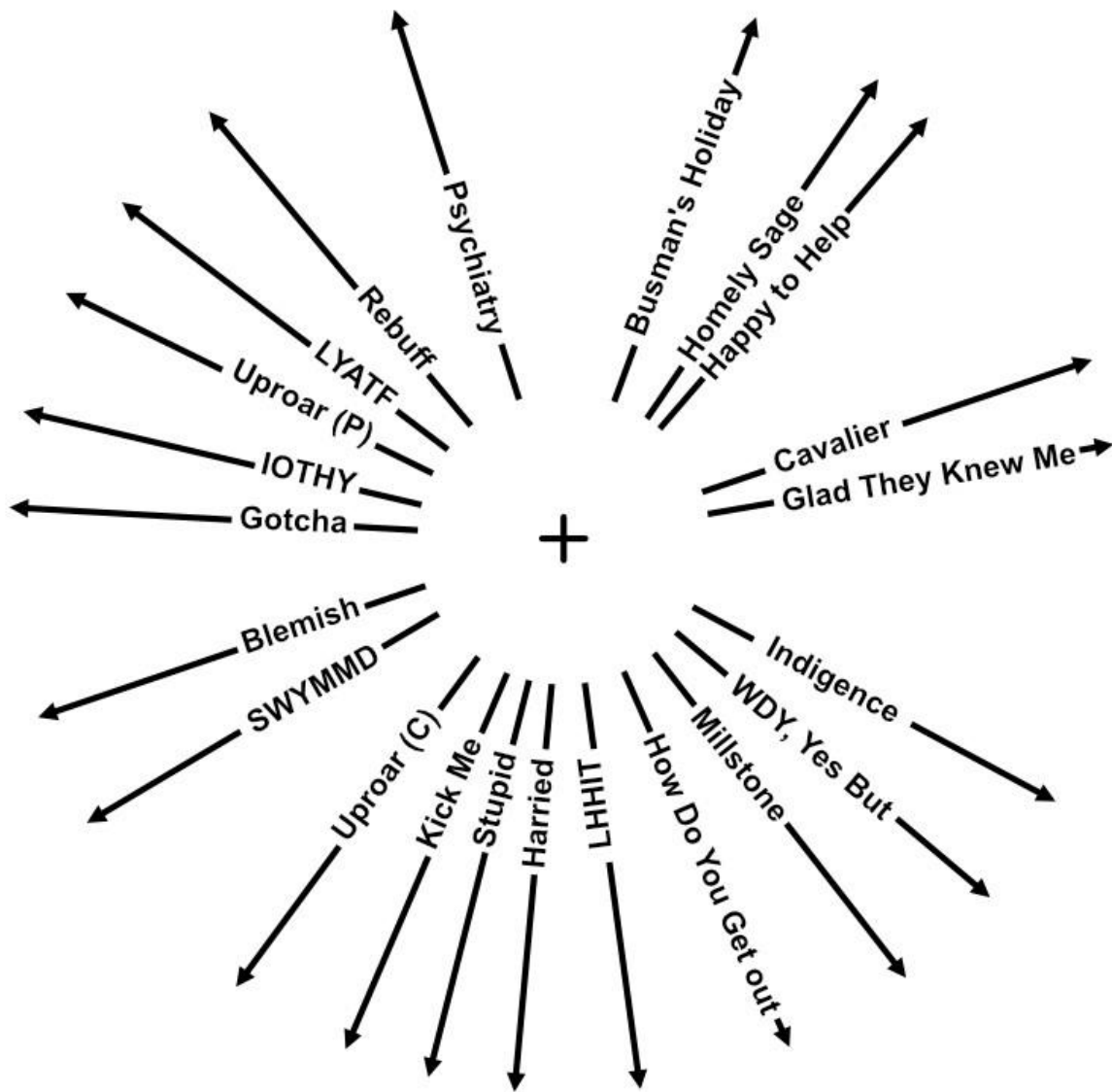
Note: these diagrams have been produced to the same size so the domains, life positions and games can be printed out onto acetate sheets and overlaid onto the client's graph printed out on paper.

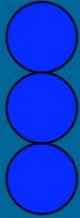












## Suicide contagion, the suicide pact and the effects of suicidal behaviour in therapeutic and family relationships.

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### Abstract

*This article is about suicide and relationships. How suicidal thoughts and behaviours can impact relationships for the suicidal person and those around them. This includes relationships between the suicidal person and other suicidal people as well as the suicidal person and others who are non-suicidal. How the suicidal can impact the other and how the other in turn then impacts the suicidal person back. What effects they have on each other in terms of how they think and feel and then how that effects their transactions with each other. More specifically it examines suicide clusters, suicide pacts, suicidality in the therapeutic relationship and suicidality in family relationships.*

### Introduction

A huge amount has been written on suicide over the years, within and outside the transactional analysis literature. This article seeks to add to the literature by looking at the role of suicidal thoughts and behaviour in human relationships. Humans are communal beings that naturally tend to form groups, be that families or other types of groups. In these groups people influence and impact each other in how they think, feel and behave. This paper seeks to identify some of the ways suicidal behaviour and talk can impact those others around them in these groups that they have formed.

### Key words

suicide, suicide pact, internet suicide pact, suicide cluster, suicide risk assessment, permission, permission transaction, group think, transference and suicide.

### Literature on suicide

Eric Berne actually wrote very little about suicide, with brief mentions of it only (Berne 1957, 1966, 1972). He made no significant definitive statement about suicide in his writings. Some of the earliest work in the transactional analysis literature on suicide comes from Goulding's (1972) writing on injunctions. In this he

described in some depth the Don't be or Don't exist injunction and its relationship to suicidal behaviour. This was taken up by Holloway (1973) who presented his pivotal work on closing the escape hatch, which was followed by Boyd and Cowles-Boyd (1980) who significantly added to the idea of working with escape hatches in therapy.

Since that time a great deal has been written on various aspects of the topic, such as: Woollams, Brown and Huige (1977); Mellor (1979) with his statement on suicide and dying; Mothersole (1996); and Little (2009). More recently this author (White 2017, 2018) has written on suicide risk assessment, as well as the relationship between suicide and homicide.

Perhaps the most prominent contribution made to all the literature on suicide was about the no suicide contract and escape hatches. These originally came from the work of Holloway (1973) and Goulding and Goulding (1978). Since that time a huge amount has been written on these and about suicide risk assessment in general. Debate has raged and still does about the validity and usability of no suicide contracts.

### Suicide cluster

A suicide cluster is a group of suicides or suicide attempts that occur in a community that are closer in time than one would normally expect. This is sometimes referred to as the copycat effect with suicidal behaviour. There is significant epidemiological evidence that, when a group of people are exposed to reports of suicide by the media, there is an increase in suicide risk by those who are susceptible to suicide (Stack 1987, 2000; Lawton, Harriss, Simkin et al. 2000; Phillips and Carstensen 1986).

In more recent times, information on suicide spread via the internet has also been seen to increase the risk of suicidal behaviour amongst high-risk individuals (Hagihara, Tarumi and Abe 2007; Rajagopal 2004). Finally these clusters can occur with any age of

individual but they tend to occur in adolescents and young adults (Robinson, Too, Pirkis and Spittal 2016).

Whilst considered relatively rare they are nevertheless real. Research in Australia over a three-year period from 2010 identified 12 such suicide clusters. This accounted for 5.6% of all suicides of young people (under 25 years of age) and the clusters ranged in size from 3 to 21 people. The adult clusters accounted for 2.3% of all suicides of adults and ranged in size from 3 to 31 people (Robinson, Too, Pirkis and Spittal 2016).

Chang, Page and Gunnel (2011) investigated media coverage on specific methods of suicide and subsequent Internet search activity. They found that media coverage of suicide by hydrogen sulphide gassing resulted in online searches increasing 50 times in the month afterwards in Japan, whilst in the United Kingdom there was an increase of nine times.

Japan is indeed an interesting case regarding suicide clusters and pacts. Internet suicide related websites have caused much concern there, particularly when it comes to group suicides, Silva (2008) examined this topic and the possible cultural reasons for it, such as the Japanese conception of the afterlife. Moronaga (1988) may also be relevant when he wrote of Japanese 'groupism' which tends to kill individuality: "We Japanese have almost an obsessive desire to conform to other people. This desire to achieve the group norm overrides individual needs and makes Japanese "other-oriented" rather than "self-oriented" (p 105).

Regardless of specific cultural differences, suicide clusters demonstrate that people can influence others by their suicidal behaviour, particularly with the young. Several explanations have been presented to explain this, such as imitation, identification and learning. However one that attracts a lot of attention is the idea of contagion. This concept is taken from the study of infectious diseases. The assumption here is that suicidal behaviour can facilitate subsequent suicidal behaviour in others, both directly when there is direct contact between the individual and the person who committed suicide, or indirectly such as via media reports. The cluster can be seen to behave like an epidemic (Haw, Hawton, Niedzwiedz and Platt 2013; Booth 2010).

## Suicide pact

According to Hemphill and Thornley (1969) "A suicide pact is an agreement between two or more persons to end their lives at the same time." (p 1335). They are quite a rare occurrence in western societies but again Japan usually is seen as having the most suicide pact deaths with around 4% of all suicides occurring there (GranBoulan, Zivi, and Basquin 1997).

Perhaps Moronaga's (1988) explanation of 'groupism' applies to pacts as well as clusters. Typically the pacts occur in longer term relationships with mostly spouses with a mean average age of 50 years. They tend to be socially isolated, there may be serious health problems, and suicide can be seen as preserving the relationship and not leaving one member behind. I (White 2011) have commented before about what is known as the post suicide fantasy. Magical thinking can occur such that the suicidal person(s) believe they have some kind of consciousness after death, so killing oneself in order to maintain the relationship makes sense. Younger people are also known to engage in suicide pacts, commonly when they have a relationship that is threatened, such as not being allowed to marry (Fishbain, D'Achille, Barsky and Aldrich 1984).

When there is a pact, the suicides tend to be more carefully planned and more lethal methods are chosen, This means that the attempts are more often completed compared to single person suicides. The relationships tend to be intense and socially isolating. There is often dependency by one or both members on each other and sometimes there is relationship asymmetry where one party is the much more dominant one. Indeed a folie à deux has been observed in some suicide pacts (Salih 1981; Noyes, Frye and Hartford 1977).

GranBoulan, Zivi, and Basquin (1997) noted in their research that lover pacts were typical in Japan, spouse pacts in England and friend pacts in Bangalore city, India. This indicates that suicide pacts are usually about relationships and their 'maintenance'. Indeed Hemphill and Thornley (1969) state "Normally the presence of another protects the subject from yielding to the suicidal urge, but in suicide pacts each partner acts on the other, intensifying the urge, so that it is the unit that kills itself, not the partners acting individually, they act as one" (p. 1338).

Regarding transactional analysis, it could be seen that there is an agreement between at least some of the ego states of the two parties. The Parent ego states may agree that a suicide pact is a valid course of action to take. The Adult ego states may agree on the course of action and undertaker the planning to carry out the attempt. The Child ego states experience a relationship that may be intense, socially isolating and both have suicidal drives to some extent.

Both parties have contemporaneous suicidal urges and ideation in the Child ego state. Once this is verbalised in the relationship, both parties realise the other is thinking the same way as them, and a group think type of phenomena begins to occur. The Adult reasoning behind the suicidality is solidified as are the Parent views on the acceptability of suicide as a solution to problems.

Finally it should be noted that one difficulty with suicide pacts is sometimes one person dies and the other does not. In many countries this would become a police matter, with police assessing how much did the surviving party contribute to the death of the other. For example, did they provide the means for the suicide attempt such as the medication for the over dose and so on. Therapists need to be conversant with local laws on these matters so clients can be correctly informed.

Pursuant to this, in more recent times there has been an increase in what are known as Internet suicide pacts (Crump 2006; Ozawa-de Silva 2008; Bell 2014). People, particularly those who are young, may meet over the internet and begin to discuss suicide, especially through websites that are suicide related. This can lead to suicide pacts of some type developing. If a person does then complete a suicide attempt subsequent police investigations can include reviewing emails of the deceased. Individuals need to be careful what they write so as not to be seen as encouraging the other to make a suicide attempt as this could have serious legal implications. Again therapists need to be aware of the law in this way so clients can be correctly informed.

### Group think

It is now known that the COVID-19 virus can spread from an infected person's mouth or nose in small liquid particles when they cough, sneeze or breathe heavily. If those particles get into the mouth or nose of another person then the virus spreads like a contagion. The permission transaction allows us to explain the contagion effect of suicidality. It provides us with an understanding of the psychological process by which the suicide of one person can 'spread' the suicidality to a high risk other. Thus we have at least one explanation of why suicide clusters occur.

This can lead to what Peck (1990) calls group think. This is where two or more people discuss matters and discover that the other party has similar thoughts and feelings as they do about a particular topic. No dissenting facts or views are presented amongst the various parties. In the case of a suicide pact both people would individually be considering suicide as a possible solution to their problems. When the issue is finally verbalised in the relationship they discover both have the similar ideas and views about suicide.

The main features of group think include:

- There is an increased belief the suicide pact is a right and good goal.
- An illusion of invulnerability that can encourage excessive optimism and risk taking can arise.
- An unquestioned belief in the group's morality and goals arises which can result in the group

members ignoring the consequences of their actions.

- Self censorship of deviations in the group's beliefs and goals increases.
- Suppression of dissent by more powerful members in the group may occur.
- Feelings of anonymity arises.
- There can be an increase in discounting self responsibility

As mentioned before, in suicide pacts the relationship tends to be socially isolating, further promoting group think, as dissenting views will not be heard. One could diagram a suicide pact as seen in Figure 1. This can occur in groups from as small as two, to much larger groups with many participants, as long as the group tends to be isolated from any dissenting views.

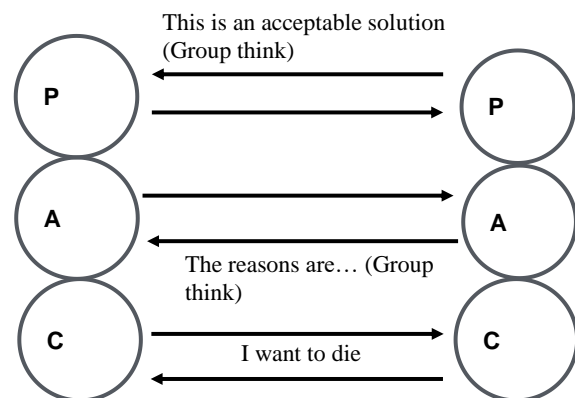


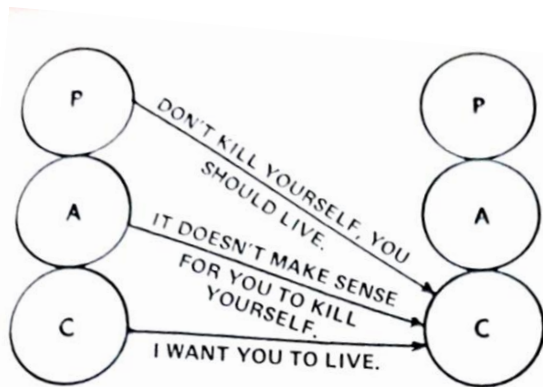
Figure 1: Suicidal Group Think

### The contagion effect

The contagion explanation is often cited in the literature and indicates some confusion whereas the theory of Transactional Analysis can further clarify how the contagion works. In seeking to explain why suicide clusters occur the contagion explanation does not answer this question. It explains what happens, not why it happens. It states that suicidal behaviour can spread like an infectious disease but does not explain the how it is spread from one person to another.

The concept of permission and the permission transaction can provide one explanation of how the 'infection' spreads from one person to another in a suicide cluster. Woollams and Brown (1978) diagram a permission transaction to exist as shown in Figure 2.

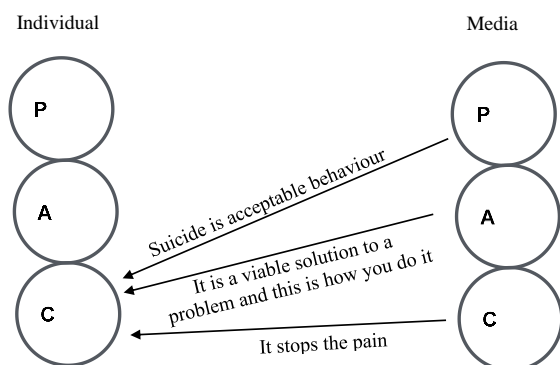
Such a permission transaction is then seen to make it easier for the recipient to behave in a way that is congruent with those transactions, in this case to exist and stay alive. Unfortunately it works the other way as well. Permissions can help a person to avoid destructive behaviour but they can also encourage a



**Figure 2: Permission Transaction (Woollams and Brown, 1978, p. 203).**

person to behave in self destructive ways. This could explain the contagion effect.

When a person commits suicide and others are informed of that, either directly or indirectly such as via the media, a permission transaction can be seen to occur. The act of suicide by one person is taken as a permission by the other person, that it is OK or possible to do such a thing. See Figure 3 where a person hears of a completed suicide via the media.



**Figure 3: Suicide reported in the media**

The individual can be seen to receive a transaction from each of the ego states of the other providing permission for them to make a suicide attempt in the future. If they are prone to suicidal urges then this permission can be quite strong. As White (2018) notes, this is a person who has made the Don't exist decision in early life.

Research shows that other risk factors which can make the permission stronger are being male, adolescent, social isolation, direct involvement with cluster victim and a history of psychiatric hospitalisation (Haw, Hawton, Niedzwiedz and Platt 2013).

## The therapeutic relationship

In workshops on suicide over the years one question the writer often asks participants is: What is your reaction to a person who suicides or makes a serious suicide attempt? Various responses have been collated over the years and commonly include these:

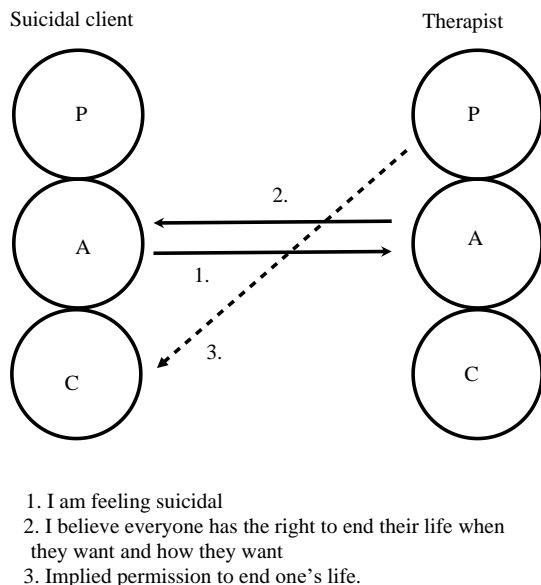
- Anger. The suicidal person is seen as selfish for hurting those left behind.
- Cowardly. It is an act which is seen as the 'easy' way out.
- Feeling sadness and despondency at the waste of a human life.
- Contemplative feelings and one asks the question, Why?
- Feeling frightened and one finds it scary as they seemed so happy.
- Some see it as a courageous act.
- Some experience a sense of guilt and responsibility that they should have done more.
- Some experience a sense of relief

Finally there is often a philosophical reaction included as well. In this instance one believes that everyone has the right to choose how and when to die. This has been discussed before in the literature by Baba Neal (2017) and Mothersole (1996). They present the idea that people have a choice about suicide. It is their right to choose to die and indeed Mothersole presents the idea of a nonpathological suicide. A person makes a choice to end their life that is not an aspect of their life script and in this sense it can be seen as nonpathological.

One needs to be cautious with such ideas. Whilst debate on such matters of suicide as a freedom of choice maybe acceptable in a scientific journal, it is a different situation in the clinical setting. If a therapist has a suicidal client sitting in front of them one needs to be very cautious in expressing these same philosophical views about suicide to the client. To tell a suicidal client about the concept of nonpathological suicide, that some see suicide philosophically, that all have the freedom to choose if they live or die, needs to be done with great caution. Indeed some would say that communicating such ideas to a suicidal client is definitely contraindicated.

These cautions have been mentioned elsewhere by Allen and Allen (1978). In discussing a therapist's responses to the suicidal client they state, "The last thing they need from the practitioner is permission to

kill themselves. Unfortunately, in the past, some physicians were trained to say: 'Suicide is one possibility. Now, let's look at alternatives.' This actually gives the patient permission to kill self." (p165). These writers make a very good point and one could diagram the transaction as in Figure 4.



**Figure 4: Permission to choose**

The client has suicidal urges and the therapist holds the philosophical view of suicide, that people have the right to choose when to die. If the therapist communicates such beliefs to the client this could be seen as the therapist giving the client permission to make a suicide attempt, even if it is an implied permission. Thus we see one way the therapeutic relationship can influence a person's suicidality in an unhealthy way. Compare this to Figure 2 which showed the permission transaction to live, and to very different situations where one demonstrates the permission to stay alive and the other at least implies a permission to make a suicide attempt.

This raises some other interesting questions for scientific journals. The information in these journals is public knowledge. They are available for anyone to read including experienced therapists, inexperienced therapists and people who are not therapists at all. If the editorial boards of these journals publish the philosophical view of suicide we might consider whether it is incumbent upon the editorial board to take action to highlight to potential negative outcomes of these views in the clinical setting.

Of course what also must be mentioned are the ethical considerations about a self-destructive person which all professional organisations consider. Most of these organisations have some kind of ethical principle where the practitioner must provide some kind of protection to such clients.

Barnes (1977) provided a summary of how various TA schools/approaches have used the ideas of escape hatches and the no suicide contract to deal with destructive clients and also how they may apply in a coaching situation. White (2011) has noted current research that shows that between 60% and 70% of psychologists and psychiatrists use some kind of no suicide contract or closing of escape hatches. So they are widely used, although there is also a quite sizeable group who are opposed to such contracts for a variety of reasons, including the philosophical view of suicide. Ultimately the practitioner must of course follow ethical principles in the best way they can for the benefit of the client, whatever their views may be.

Another implication is for suicide risk assessment and this was originally presented by White (2011). He states, "First, some are of the view that suicide is everyone's right. Each person has the right to choose when and how to die, for what ever reason they may have.... If a women is suicidal and her husband is of this view, it seems that the marriage may in fact contribute to the level of suicide risk, not reduce it."(p. 137). If family members and other people close to the suicidal person have the philosophical view of suicide they can give the permission shown in Figure 4 if they express those views to the individual. If that is the case then the risk of suicide increases and does not decrease, as many risk assessment schedules predict is the effect of having close loved ones around.

### Family relationships and suicidality

Living with a suicidal person is a very emotionally taxing thing to do. It is a very stressful set of circumstances to live under. A parent who is living with an adult child who is suicidal is going to experience significant levels of stress, ongoing, over potentially long periods of time. They wonder each time they return home if they will find the individual dead in the home. Each morning as they awake they wonder whether the individual may be dead in their bedroom. In such circumstances, it is inevitable that the parent's own inner Child ego state sooner or later is going to feel a strong desire for that stress to finish.

Generally the parent will know that the only way for the stress to cease is for the adult child to move away from the home or die. The parent also knows realistically that the suicidal thoughts of the child are not going to subside or finish anytime soon and indeed may persist for a long period of time. In addition at some level the parent also knows that if the individual dies, their own stress about the potential suicide ceases instantly, one hundred percent and forever. This makes it very attractive to the Child ego state.

There are two points to consider about this. First if a parent or other close loved one becomes aware of feeling these things, that can be a source of further

stress and pain for them. For example, recently a mother told me of an experience with her son, "I was walking behind him down the stairs at our home and all of a sudden I had this thought of shoving him down the stairs in front of me". She raised this with me as it disturbed her and she felt guilty about it. She stated, "How could I, his mother, think such things about my ill son!?" Of course it is a natural feeling for her to have as she was very tired of the stress his prolonged suicidality was having on her. It was only a thought and of course she never acted on that thought. She was reassured of this and allowed an opportunity to express those feelings in the therapeutic setting and the situation was dealt with. In working with close loved ones around the suicidal individual it is necessary to ask about these feelings, then to normalise them and to have the client express them in a way that the client sees fit.

Second, as these feelings can exist in those around the suicidal person, therefore they can be expressed to that person either consciously or unconsciously. In this way those people can support and indeed provide further permission for the person to make a suicide attempt as was shown in Figure 4, but with the family member instead of the therapist. One could say this is a type of suicide pact but in this case the suicidal person can be getting encouragement for suicide by a non-suicidal other. However there is a collusion between them in this way for suicidal behaviour. As stated before most suicide risk assessment schedules will state that having close loved ones around is a protective factor for the suicidal person. However that is not always the case, sometimes they can be an increasing risk factor as just explained here.

## Conclusion

This paper considers suicidal behaviour and how people can impact each other by such behaviour. The literature has long discussed the idea of suicide clusters and suicide contagion and explained what happens with this but does not explain why suicide clusters happen. Through the concept of the permission transaction, transactional analysis can provide one explanation of how the contagion effect of suicide can occur. We need also to consider the processes of group think and how that contributes to suicide pacts.

Finally, we need to review how suicidal behaviour is discussed in the therapeutic relationship, and how family relationships can be impacted upon so they come to include a type of suicide pact in some cases

We need research to provide a more detailed analysis of how one person's thoughts, feelings and behaviours can impact another. More specifically, we need an examination of the ways by which people can have their personality or perception of their own identity

become merged or confused with another person. This can apply for all behaviour, which of course can include suicidal behaviour

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## Passivity in Education

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### Abstract

*The author addresses the occurrence and implications of passivity within the educational environment. After reviewing the theoretical background within the TA literature, he reports several research studies before identifying helpful approaches to tackling such passivity. He includes three case studies, complete with suggestions and diagrams of ways in which overadaptation may be resolved.*

### Key Words

passivity, discounting, transactions, ego states, symbiosis, overadaptation, research

### Introduction

Passivity (Schiff and Schiff 1971) is a major challenge for practitioners in all fields of TA: for psychotherapists passive behaviours contribute to a client's maladjusted script patterns (Cornell, 1988; English 1977); for organisational consultants it means having to confront inefficient dynamics (Berne, 1963) that limit the system's capacity to turn the vision and mission of the organisation into a tangible reality; for counsellors passivity results in the reduced access to individual or group resources (Fassbind-Kech 2013) and therefore leads to lower levels of autonomy (Berne 1964). In terms of education, passivity undermines the success of teaching and learning, and thus reinforces learners' limiting beliefs about self as a learner, the roles of teacher and student, and the function or outcome of learning (Barrow 2009).

Research is an important aspect for many schools of psychology but there are considerable differences in the ways they lend themselves to evidence-based study. TA is a mixture of cognitive-behavioural and psychodynamic approaches (Schlegel 1998) and some of its concepts are more measurable than others. For instance, passive behaviours can be more easily observed and quantified than intrapsychic dynamics such as discounting (Mellor and Schiff 1975). Nonetheless, it is important to integrate various epistemological perspectives to enhance the

processes of teaching and learning. This article will explore several aspects of educational passivity from a theoretical, evidence-based and practical perspective.

If TA is to genuinely make an impact in educational practice, it is vital that educators are fully aware of "the potential for passivity and symbiosis that is typical of schooling models of learning" (Barrow 2009 p. 301). There are many ways of confronting symbiotic invitations (Wayne 1976) to consistently promote students' full awareness of their Adult capacities. However choosing the right course of action is challenging. In view of that, this article will discuss the theoretical background of passivity from an educational perspective concerning both teachers and students, along with practical implications and application.

### Theoretical Background of Passivity

The concept of passivity within TA originated within the field of psychotherapy and since its beginning has made its way to other applications of TA. The underlying mechanisms of passive behaviours involve discounting and the re-creation of past symbiotic relationship patterns that confirm outdated 'dependency contracts', which maintain maladjusted frames of reference (Schiff and Schiff, 1975) and diminish problem solving capacities. People discount internally aspects of self, other or the situation which provides them, along with grandiosity (Schiff and Schiff 1971), with justifications for their actions (or non-actions!). Passive behaviours are categorised (Schiff and Schiff 1971) into the following: doing nothing, overadaptation, agitation, incapacitation and violence.

Stewart & Joines (2009) emphasised that passivity occurs when an individual ceases to take effective actions that would contribute to the solution of a problem. Educationally speaking, "passivity will occur when the student ceases to be active or ceases to provide information about himself" (Jagiela, 2004, p. 87); for instance, when a student responds to a

teacher's question with silence, rather than admitting they do not understand and asking for an explanation. The aforementioned authors provide a description of passivity along with relevant psychodynamic mechanisms, though they lack an evidence base and do not place their ideas in a wider context of other psychological theories.

Passive behaviours do not arise in isolation but result from cultural scripting for passivity (Campos 1975) and collectively add to the formation of 'institutional discount structures' that unite to reinforce limiting script beliefs that lead a child to abdicate their problem-solving capacities in favour of adaptation to parental powers. Consequently, effective actions, including teaching and learning, are thwarted by a basic lack of trust in our powers that would otherwise help us to take charge of the environment. Campos stresses the importance of challenging these unhelpful patterns, especially the Don't Be You scripting message passed on at school that alienates us from the creative capacities of the Child. He extends the original thinking about passivity by placing it in an institutional context and providing a perspective that links early script decisions with the formation of social structures.

Furthermore, passivity can take many forms, one of which is hyperactivity, as described by Edwards (1979), who highlights that hyperactive behaviours result from a combination of medical, social, emotional and nutritional causes. She points out that doing nothing and overadaptation are most likely to go unnoticed due to the tacit agreement of the social environment in perpetuating these behaviours. On the other hand, agitation and incapacitation and violence tend to be seen as the most problematic because they generate considerable discomfort in the people surrounding the child. Additionally, when considering long-term problems, the passivity is taken for granted by all due to the social/emotional components of the situation that stem from the underlying, and contextually reinforced, symbiosis (Schiff and Schiff 1971). Thus, when making interventions, a TA practitioner needs to ask themselves: "How does the family system support the passive behaviour?" (Edwards, 1979, p. 61) in order to define the contribution of each family member to the creation and maintenance of the situation.

Schmid and Messmer (2005) consider the notion of responsibility in organisations as a polar opposite to passivity, although they do not state this explicitly. Their focus is on systems of responsibilities and organisational design, rather than education, and therefore their thinking could not be extrapolated and applied directly to educational practice. Hay (2009) translated the discount matrix into an accessible description of patterns of discounting and linked these

to corresponding discounting behaviours and alternative responses in a model she called Steps to Success. Her ideas are applicable in the context of organisational learning and provide a clear framework for tackling passivity to the extent that the learner is motivated and can understand the model. Hay's approach could not be applied with younger learners because only students above the age of 15 were able to grasp the abstract conceptualisation necessary.

Overall, TA literature offers a description of passivity from a psychotherapeutic perspective, placing it in the realms of games. For instance, Ingram (1980) shows an analysis of passive games, which could be applied to some extent in the counselling field, but not really in other areas of TA. Consequently, there is a need for further developments in the area of educational passivity in order to identify strategies that would enhance the process of teaching and learning.

## Evidence Based Considerations

In order to consider passivity further, it is useful to review some pieces of research that quantify passive behaviours and therefore provide an evidence base for the theoretical claims. Assessing the scale, frequency and distribution of passivity in relation to other contributing factors will enable us to evaluate this TA concept through data.

Fine, Covell and Tracy (1978) carried out research on the effects of TA training on teacher attitudes and behaviour. Their sample consisted of 18 teachers, though the data did not cover the full range due to incomplete questionnaires. The authors used the following three questionnaires:

- 28 item self-reported Personal Orientation Scale for Teachers (Fine, 1975) measuring scores representing the four life positions (Berne 1962);
- 20 item self-reported Pupil Control Ideology Questionnaire (Hoy & Blankenship, 1972) measuring the teachers' tendency to employ controlling versus non-controlling practices of student education;
- 18 item self-reported Social Climate Inventory of the educational environment as either open and accepting or closed and negative.

Throughout the training the researchers introduced the experimental teachers to TA concepts such as structural and transactional analysis, life positions, stroking, time structuring, games, rackets, discounting, passivity, and briefly scripts. The specific TA concepts are not referenced in the research, however 'Born to Win' (James and Jongeward 1971) was cited as the base for designing group activities for the teachers.

While passive behaviours were not their main focus of study, the findings indicate that TA training resulted in

a significant increase in the I'm OK, You're OK position and contributed to teacher self-awareness. Furthermore, in TA terms, the following outcomes were reported :“(a) greater awareness of own behaviour and greater ability to change it. (Includes awareness of their ego state transactions with children.); (b) more listening to children and awareness of their needs. (Includes awareness of what strokes children need and were inviting.); (c) more awareness of how they had been hooked into games and how to stay out of them; (d) greater responsibility given to students.” (Fine et al. 1978, p. 238). This study does not address passivity directly, although the findings suggest that training teachers in several TA concepts does decrease the potential for passive behaviours, as indicated by the increased self-awareness of the study participants. Taking account of the existence of particular behaviours is the first step to reduce discounting and, by implication, passivity. The research by Fine et al. suggests that providing teachers with a basic working knowledge of TA concepts reduces the potential for the occurrence of educational passivity.

Thweatt and Miller (1979) also investigated the effects of TA training delivered in lectures and in so-called 'Labs' with the objective of promoting “growth and change as well as learning” (p. 290) by combining teaching with counselling. The TA Labs curriculum contained 'an expanded TA101', however there were no more details provided regarding the TA concepts taught. The researchers investigated changes in student behaviour and attitude at the beginning and end of the course by considering the following variables:

- Present Tense versus Past or Future Tense statements as indicators of contact and intimacy in the here and now;
- Tentative versus Decisive statements as indicators of growth;
- Accepting Responsibility versus Assigning Responsibility as indicators of passivity through 'Cop-outs';
- Feelings versus Cognitive Statements as indicators of intimacy and growth of awareness
- Stroking versus Discounting as indicators of growth;
- Clear Thinking versus Confused Thinking as indicators of clarity, growth and Adult processing.

The authors investigated three groups: “Section one used some TA, section two used a variety of personality theories, none of which were TA, and section three used TA exclusively” (p. 291). The samples size was 23. For the purpose of comparison, only Sections 2 and 3 were compared. The TA group

showed the largest increase of the here-and-now statements, a reduction in 'what-ifs' statements, which were replaced with self-disclosure, and an increase in stroking. Both groups showed an increase in accepting responsibility, indicating that TA is not the only approach that can reduce discounting and passivity.

This study echoes the findings of Fine et al., suggesting that TA training reduced the potential for the occurrence of educational passivity. Thweatt and Miller used the recording of the first and last session of training and evaluated two 10-minute randomly selected segments in terms of statements corresponding to the variables outlined above. However their statistical methodology was less elaborate – they only applied the Chi Square test to assess the significance of difference between the study groups.

Zerin, Zerin and Cuiran (1997) compared stress responses of Chinese and American high school students using an 18-item instrument, with some questions addressing passive behaviours. The authors investigated 77 American and 80 Chinese females, both groups aged 16-18. Each population was divided into two groups: 49 Chinese and 48 American students responded to the checklist items concerning their family life; 31 Chinese and 29 American students responded to questions concerning their personal life with friends. Passivity questions were included in section E (Behaviour Mechanisms) of the 'Q' model checklist created based on Eric Berne's original concepts. Discounting was included in the Attitude Mechanisms (Section C). Additionally, the authors provided specific references to the concepts corresponding to each section of their instrument, for instance:

- Passivity - Behaviours (Schiff & Schiff, 1971, pp. 71-78; Schiff and Contributors, 1975, pp. 10-14)
- Discounts (Schiff et al., 1975, pp. 14-15)

The Chinese students reported that in stressful situations with friends, 72% do nothing, whereas with family that figure is 73%. In contrast, 17% of American students reported doing nothing with friends and 16% with their family. 20% of Americans agitate with friends and 22% with family. 36% of Americans incapacitate themselves with family and only 14% with friends. 10% of Chinese students reported being violent with family and 7% with friends. 17% of American reported being violent with friends and only 2% with their family. This study provides detailed figures in a cross-cultural context; however the authors do not compare each category of passive behaviours systematically, e.g. there is not data for agitation regarding Chinese students. Nonetheless, the comparative aspect paves the way to validating some TA concepts interculturally; for example the authors state: “Compared with

American students, Chinese students easily leave things open-ended and "do nothing" and use a "monotone" when speaking with friends and family because they inherited the old Chinese tradition." (p. 253). Understanding the cross-cultural aspect of passivity could be a starting point to identifying culturally specific script messages, which could potentially lead to designing preventative measures.

The last study to be reviewed provided the most in-depth analysis of passivity. The aim of the research project entitled 'Passivity at School' (Pierzchała, 2013) was to broadly describe passive behaviours within the context of the Polish education system. Pierzchała set out to identify the factors conducive to passivity, both in students and teachers. She investigated a number of variables such as:

- gender;
- ego states (Berne, 1961);
- tendencies to form symbiotic relationships (Schiff & Schiff, 1971);
- life positions (Berne, 1972);
- satisfaction of psycho-biological hungers (Berne, 1970);
- student learning outcomes;
- the length of teacher classroom experience.

The psychometric tools constructed for the purpose of the study were based on the classical TA concepts indicated above and underwent a validation procedure described in detail. The variables were examined thoroughly, using statistical tests in order to ascertain the correlation between the frequency of passive behaviours and the aforementioned variables. The data gathered included 211 teacher and 333 student responses. Pierzchała devised and verified a questionnaire measuring passive behaviours on a scale of 1-120. Additionally, the quantitative data was complemented with qualitative research consisting of 34 student and 10 in-depth teacher interviews. The generic results of the study are shown in Table 1.

The main findings emphasised that overadaptation was the most common passive behaviour, both for teachers and students, as it appeared to be socially acceptable. Additionally, passivity in both groups was highly correlated; teachers and students reinforced each other's passivity through positive feedback loops. The qualitative data revealed that although the underlying mechanisms for passivity can be similar (but varied in intensity), they lead to different passive behaviours. For example the tension build up in a student due to a lesson that is perceived as boring leads to doing nothing in one lesson, but can lead to violence in another context outside of school.

PASSIVE BEHAVIOUR	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
Mean values of passive behaviours	58.33	50.04
<b>Mean values for each passive behaviour</b>		
Doing nothing	12.46	7.42
Overadaptation	12.81	11.04
Agitation	10.83	9.45
Violence	6.82	7.96
Incapacitation	8.01	9.42

**Table 1. Results of the study of school passive behaviours in Poland (source: Pierzchała, 2013)**

Additionally, the qualitative analysis of student interviews revealed a psychodynamic rationale for the observed passive behaviours. For example, in the student interviews some stated:

*"If the teacher teaches me something, then well, this is his job, this is his task, and I can't blame him. And the others will not teach and still pick on us during the lesson. But I still have half a year until I graduate..."* (Pierzchała, 2013, p. 196).

*"Because the teacher always screams when someone chats in the lesson, and when you defy her... she screams so much. So we keep quiet but the class is so boring that I ... I can't stand it, so I have to hold my eyes to stay awake."* (Pierzchała, 2013, p. 197).

These quotes demonstrate that students respond to teachers' passivity (verbal violence in this case) with passivity (doing nothing and overadaptation), which creates interrelated positive feedback loops. These findings suggest that some educators are not particularly interested in the pupil's world and tend to avoid more intimate contact, which in turn is a contributing factor to the occurrence of educational passivity.

This study also highlighted that due to overadaptation, teacher activities often lead to feigned actions with the sole purpose of maintaining an image of professionalism. In reality, the educators reported low levels of professional satisfaction and engagement in their relationships with students. The main suggestions for decreasing passive behaviours included awareness building for teachers and students aiming to uncover their Adult motivators for the tasks

relevant to their corresponding roles. Furthermore, in order to prevent educational passivity, Pierzchała urges educators to become aware of their ego states, to be open to form professionally intimate relationships with pupils, to identify ulterior messages and to act from a position of resourcefulness. These recommendations are consistent with the studies mentioned before, although they may be difficult to implement given the rigidity of educational systems in many parts of the world.

Pierzchała's research validates the TA concept of passive behaviours by integrating quantitative and qualitative research methods. She used a range of statistical tools (e.g.  $\alpha$ -Cronbach and semantic differential coefficients) that enabled assessment of the measurable aspects of passive behaviours with scientific precision. The research contains detailed descriptions of the process of validating the questionnaires and thus contributes to the evidence base aspects of TA theory. Therefore, Pierzchała shows that TA has also potential for being a precise science that measures observable behaviours.

Apart from the studies mentioned here, there is little research carried out in the area of educational passivity and further work is required to construct an evidence base for TA concepts applied in education.

## Helpful Approaches to Tackling Passivity

The pieces of research described before identify the necessity to confront passivity in teachers and students, as well as in the very nature of educational processes. For example, if teachers gained sufficient awareness to effectively pinpoint transactions containing discounts, they could reduce the frequency of passive behaviours. There are other works that echo these findings, which further helps to build a more coherent picture.

Babcock (1975) studied passivity amongst caregivers and provided a systemic overview, which underscored the importance of awareness building for carers. Although her focus was on carers in public health, some of her claims can be applied to teachers who may be struggling with rigid and unresponsive systems. She put forward some valuable suggestions for tackling institutional issues:

1. "Be aware of the problem.
2. Locate threats and obstacles.
3. Find ways to finagle (using devious methods to achieve one's end).
4. Seek counsel from a known finagler in your system (people who are friendly, knowledgeable and have strategic influence in the system).

5. Winners who revolt wait until they have sufficient power base.
6. Pick on a problem that is less dependent on the system.
7. Find a more comfortable sub-system." (p. 394)

Babcock instils a sense of hope by offering a set of steps necessary to confront systemic passivity. She does it playfully and invites TA practitioners to identify resources that can support them in facilitating change. By stating "There are ways to win in a system which has flaws" (p. 394), Babcock challenges the cultural scripting for passivity that becomes normalised in public systems. Theoretically speaking, these suggestions are valuable, although with the current digitalisation perpetuated by social media and remote learning resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, public systems of healthcare and education have become quite impersonal. Apart from rigidity, there is a rampant lack of contact (both physical and psychological) which becomes a contributing factor to passivity. Therefore, it is vital to consider some communication strategies that could help to address passive behaviours.

Garcia (1982) puts forward the notion of reactivity defined as "a communication process used to clarify feelings, fantasies and intuitions, as well as for asking directly for wants and confronting others" (p.123). Although the author does not specifically place his thinking in educational terms, he underscores that "reactivity avoids passivity, symbiosis, games and rackets, and enhances closeness in relationships" (p. 123), which is consistent with the observations coming from the aforementioned works (Pierzchała 2013; Thweatt and Miller 1979; Fine, Covell and Tracy 1978; Edwards 1979). Garcia offers an outline of a reactivity, which includes becoming aware of feeling reactions, thinking about them to identify the want and acting on the desires to experience relief. Translating this into educational practice, teachers can be aware of their needs and express them rather than suppressing them, given that they might operate from the top position in the symbiosis (i.e. Parent and Adult). Furthermore, Garcia points out that closeness and intimacy are possible only if the Child feels safe and acknowledged. Therefore, educators can prevent the occurrence of educational passivity by accounting for their own relational needs (i.e. for safety) and acknowledging the needs of their students. Lastly, the author proposes a 'reactivity contract' which can be adjusted to classroom practice as a communication guideline for teachers and students.

The suggestions offered can have an impact to the extent they do not contradict the educator's script, as otherwise they will be discounted because they do not fit within their current educational frame of reference.

Montuschi (1984) underscored that the schooling experience is often reduced to mechanical procedures that neglect the quality and meaning of the process, which results in the impoverishment of the student-teacher relationship. He identified several teacher script beliefs that undermine the process of teaching and learning, and thus also contribute to the occurrence of passivity:

- Learning Script: I'm OK only if you know everything – focusing solely on the learning outcome and neglecting the richness of the process;
- Change Script: I'm OK only if you change – misplacing responsibility in the teacher and assigning none to the students for their process of learning and change;
- The Availability Script: Tell me what I have to do! – overreliance on external expertise while discounting one's resources;
- The Innovative Script: I hid my successes to show them off at the right time: and everyone will see me – avoiding sharing resources with the aim of self-promotion within the institution.

As well as identifying these script beliefs, Montuschi shows how these can be modified through, for example, discovering new meanings in the learning process, clarifying lines of responsibility, activating teacher resources from within and appropriate collaboration. The author's comments concerning teachers' script themes provide more psychodynamic depth to the issues of educational passivity and help to identify areas for specific interventions when coaching or training educators.

Barrow (2009) also refers to scripting by pointing out that schooling is a universal experience that is "fundamental in creating an individual's frame of reference regarding learning" (p. 298). Learning and schooling are not necessarily synonymous. Many of us have memories of being at school without necessarily learning anything. There are many models of learning, such as dogmatic, technological, liberal, progressive, humanistic and radical (Elias and Merriam 1980/1995; Newton 2003), that can be placed on a continuum according to their transformative features. The further the model lies from the traditional schooling framework, the greater the potential for challenging the occurrence of educational passivity. Barrow invites a sense of self-agency in educators by urging them to choose the educational model that best reflects their core values in a given situation. This approach is quite refined and enables a teacher to consider the nuances of an educational situation; however it requires a high level of self-awareness and TA training to understand and consider these concepts practically.

## Examples of Application

At this point the question arises: How can TA practitioners translate these ideas into impactful interventions? The following examples are drawn from the author's experience and represent an attempt at transforming theory into practice: as such these are not evidence based and enter the realm of human subjectivities. Each type of passive behaviour (doing nothing, overadaptation, agitation, incapacitation and violence) can be confronted in many ways and the short case studies illustrate some options available, but are not, by any means, exhaustive.

### Case Study 1: Activating Physis via the Child when learners are doing nothing

The author was involved in running a professional development course for teachers (Transactional Analysis Proficiency Awards for Teachers and Educators - see [www.taproficiencyawards.org](http://www.taproficiencyawards.org)) in Guatemala.

When the Covid-19 pandemic wrought havoc around the world, the training had to move online via Zoom. In the Guatemalan context where Internet access is inconsistent and IT skills of teachers require enhancement, the training process was ineffective. The computer screen became a barrier that caused the teachers to lose interest, not attend and avoid the necessary tasks, such as reading or participating in group discussions (doing nothing). In order to challenge the passivity, the author took the following steps:

1. Teachers were asked to do something pleasurable and fun for their Child ego state, e.g. spend an afternoon listening to music, go for a walk, play with their children, watch an hilarious comedy, cook or paint, to name a few.
2. Each participant was invited to send a photo of their chosen activity.
3. During the next training session on Zoom, a slide containing all their pictures was shown (Photo 1 below).
4. Each course participant was asked to write one word in the chat in response to the pictures (responses included: freedom, joy, purpose, lightness, creativity, change, flow, connection)
5. The idea of physis (Berne 1971) was explained to the participants with reference to the pictures and the words. The following definition was used: "the force of Nature, which eternally strives to make things grow and to make growing things more perfect" (p. 98). By connecting the experiences of joy, meaning, connection, creativity and freedom with Berne's definition, the teachers had a felt sense of the concept of physis.



**Photo 1: Assignment for Teachers - Do Something Fun**

Subsequently, the teachers became more engaged, they spoke more during online discussions, asked questions and demonstrated their active learning by making links between various TA concepts. By injecting playful Child energy into the training, the author created conditions for uncovering and activating physis.

**Case Study 2: Crossing transactions to confront overadaptation to the teacher**

The author delivered training concerning vocational orientation for third year psychopedagogy students at a Guatemalan university. The tasks in the workshop were quite open-ended and required the participants to formulate their opinions; for example, one of the questions was “Discuss the different vocational needs of each ego state in the context of teaching”. The students were working in pairs. It transpired they seemed to think that the facilitator expected particular answers from them. Instead of becoming an all-knowing Parent, the author invited the students to examine their thinking and consider the validity of their claims. The following transcript, illustrated in Figure 1, exemplifies how the course participants were encouraged to value their opinions:

1. STUDENT: “*Is this alright?*” (student pointing to their written answer on a poster)
2. FACILITATOR: “*What do you think?*” (asked with curiosity)
3. ST: “*I don’t know...*” (pleading voice, expecting an answer)

4. F: “*What evidence do you need to know if you are right?*” (crossing the transaction)

The author was mindful of his White Privilege (Naughton and Tudor 2006), which was another factor that contributed to the students’ initial overadaptation. By treating them with respect and affirming the OKness of their thinking, the author suggested that they deserved to be listened to. They no longer had to overadapt to an imaginary standard that would diminish the value of their opinions. The students gradually opened up in the workshop and started to speak their mind and interpret the TA concepts presented to them through their own eyes, rather than trying to guess what they imagined the facilitator wanted to hear. The group left the workshop with a calm sense of self-assurance and validation.

**Case Study 3: Naming transactions containing discounts**

During the professional development course for teachers mentioned in Case Study 1, the participants studied the concept of script. They were asked to share with the group their favourite childhood fairy tales. The groups was quite multicultural, representing seven different cultures. Most of the educators gave answers containing examples drawn from Occidental culture, such as Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, and Snow White. One of the participants spoke quite apologetically about her favourite childhood fairy tales “*Oh, these are just little stories from my village*”. This course participant wanted to overadapt to the group by diminishing the value of her cultural heritage.



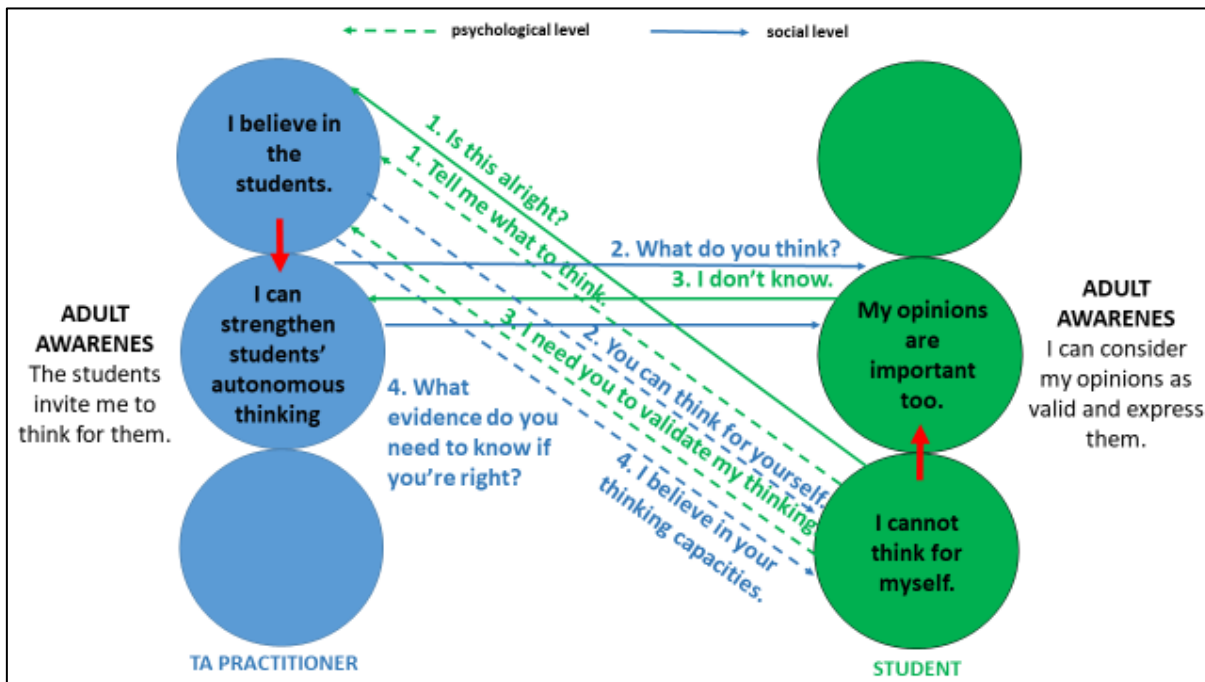


Figure 1: Crossing a Transaction to Confront Overadaptation

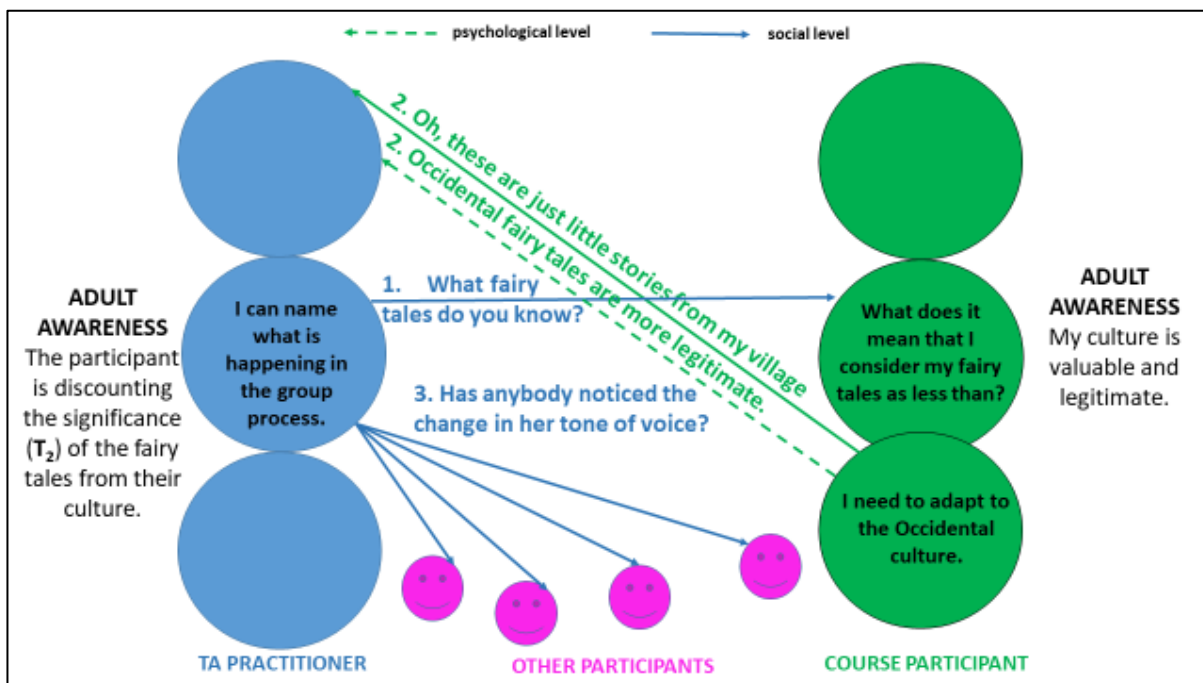


Figure 2: Naming a Transaction containing a Discount

1. Facilitator: "What fairy tales do you know?"
2. Student: "Oh, these are just little stories from my village" (said apologetically)
3. Facilitator: "Has anyone noticed the change in her tone of voice?"

It became clear that the fairy tales representing the dominant culture (White, Occidental) were seen as more legitimate. The author named the discount that indicated that the participant wanted to overadapt to what they perceived as more valid examples of fairy tales. Following the decontamination, a discussion emerged about internalised racism, while the participant who discounted the significance of their examples was invited to celebrate their culture. At the end of the workshop many participants realised that they could value their own cultures to a greater extent. Figure 2. shows the relevant transactions.

## Conclusion

To sum up, there are many options and approaches to educational passivity – it is indeed a field of TA that requires further development. The theoretical deliberations as well as the evidence-based aspects really seem to reinforce the core assumptions of TA concerning promoting OKness, closeness and intimacy as a foundation of human interactions. Educators can effectively tackle passivity provided they operate from a place of self-awareness that enables them to own their script patterns and recognise invitations to symbiosis. On the other side of the coin, teachers need to be able and supported to hand back ownership of the learning process to the student. Otherwise, it becomes a gamey interaction along the lines of 'You can't make me...'. In many parts of the world educators are burdened by increasing work demands and this article is by no means a suggestion they have to deliver even more. It is about working smarter, rather than harder, to clarify lines of responsibility. It is the author's deep belief that passivity decreases when teachers are given support to recognise their resources instead of criticism that they often face.

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## Injunctions and Motivation in Human Growth from the Perspective of Triology

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### Abstract

*The author combines Kandathil's (1978) approach of Triology that combines I, You and Goal, and how these are connected in terms of Identity, Rationality and Relationship, with transactional analysis theories about injunctions and permissions. The result is illustrated as an extended GK Frame to provide a model for analysing how childhood decisions are preventing the current growth of clients. Injunctions and injunctive messages are both considered, and permissions are described in terms of love, hope and trust. A significant link is also made with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and this in turn prompts some initial considerations about the nature of spiritual growth. A brief case study is included to demonstrate how the resulting framework can assist with analysis that can be shared with clients.*

### Key Words

injunction, injunctive messages, motivation, triology, identity, relationship, rationality, hierarchy of needs, GK frame, permission

### Introduction

Human growth is a complicated process. Many theories have attempted to explain the true nature of human growth. Psychology, philosophy, and spirituality have joined hands in their attempt to present a satisfactory explanation of this aspect. Humanistic psychologists assume that the fundamental nature of human beings is good. But this assumption is objectionable in the light of real-life observations. There is a lot of unrest in society, and many people are unhappy. At the global level, piling up weapons of mass destruction, unprecedented levels of pollution, global warming, and many other man-made problems are causing a threat to the very existence of the human race like the sword of Damocles. If the fundamental nature of human beings is good, why do people think that they are not OK? What is it that disrupts the natural flow of human growth? This is the problem discussed in this article.

Three different theoretical approaches are compared here to deal with the subject from a holistic perspective: Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs; injunctions (Goulding and Goulding 1979) and injunctive messages (Mc Neel 2010); and GK Frame (Kandathil 1978; Sidharthan 2016). Brief descriptions of these theories are provided in the article which will enable the readers to make meaningful conclusions about the subject.

Intuition is a faculty that often gives an initial impetus to any scientific exploration. Subjective experiences of people need to be studied while exploring new avenues of knowledge, especially while dealing with depth psychology. The definition of human growth is highly subjective, so the personal experiences of people are given due weightage in the methodological approach of this article. One case study to vouch for the practical usability of the topic is also discussed.

### Triology

Triology is a meta-theory propounded by Fr. George Kandathil SJ (1978). Triology means a theory of three. I, You, and Goal are its cornerstones. Triology essentially attempts to answer the question: Who is a human being? GK Frame represents the central concept of Triology, which furnishes a philosophical structural analysis of human beings. Triology assumes every human being is defined by three different but interrelated aspects: relationships, rationality and identity. GK Frame, a name applied later by Sidharthan (2016) is illustrated as an equilateral triangle formed with three vertices marked as I for Individual, U for You or others, and G for goal. Points I and U form the base of the triangle. and G is at the apex. The sides of the triangle are Relationship (IU), Identity (IG), and Rationality (UG).

- **Relationship:** The first relationship a person has in this world is with their primary caretaker, who is often their mother. A problem in the relationship with the primary caretaker at this stage can cause lifelong relationship problems.

Human existence is essentially a matter of interdependence. No one can survive all alone; each one needs to have a relationship with others. In the perspective of Indian Psychology these 'others' include not only other human beings but also all other organic and inorganic forms as well. At this point of expanded awareness, U shall grow from mere You to the Universe. Human beings depend on others for food and other material needs; also for procreation and recreation, so the relationship is fundamental to human existence.

- **Identity:** When a person attains their goal, they tend to identify themselves with their achievement. When somebody says that they are an Olympian, they are identifying themselves with an achieved goal. Thus, a self-image is born, which covers up the real nature of the individual. Personality is a mask that covers up the true essence of the individual. Many of the psychological issues are arising from the confusion of self-image and identity. What determines a person's true identity is the ultimate Source of their origin, not the physical achievement or its absence. This is in alignment with the philosophical assumption of TA. People are OK. In other words, self-image is different from identity. At this, philosophical level G will grow from a mere Goal to God (whatever you believe this to be).
- **Rationality:** The Greek Philosopher Aristotle said that 'man' is a rational animal. Rationality is the quality that distinguishes human beings from other animals. When a person can understand how others (U) help them to reach their goal (G) the individual is thinking rationally. Here the U stands for not only human beings but also the world of inanimate matter in the environment.

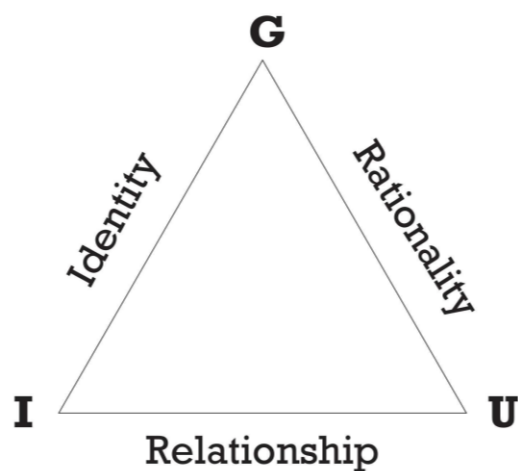


Figure 1: GK Frame (Kandathil, 1978, P.63)

When one can learn from others' and our own mistakes, we are thinking rationally. Rationality helps us to survive in the world and guides us to develop the talents we are born with.

It is possible to form many other analytical frames for understanding human problems and also their solutions from the GK frame. It has got the flexibility and the strength to understand various human problems resulting from irrational behaviours, wrong ways of relating and faulty identity. Also, it can build a bridge between psychology and spirituality. Expanding on the vast possibility of the GK frame is beyond the scope of this article. However, GK Frame is the basic structure onto which the other theories mentioned in this article are applied.

### Injunctions, Injunctive Messages and Permissions

Berne (1972) wrote that "Recently, R.D. Laing, the British psychiatrist, has described in a radio broadcast a view of life which is amazingly similar, even in its terminology, to the theory discussed in this book. For example, he uses the word "injunction" for strong parental programming. Since, at this writing, he has not yet published these ideas..... " (p.59). Berne referenced the term "injunction" to Steiner (1966) and described it as an "unfair negative command... script injunction or stopper... given by a Controlling Parent or a crazy Child ego state." (p.107).

Goulding and Goulding (1979) defined an injunction as "messages from the Child Ego State of Parents, given out of the parents' pains, unhappiness, anxiety, disappointment, anger, frustration, secret desires." (p.9). Goulding and Goulding also settled on a list of twelve common injunctions. McNeel (2010) published a list of twenty-five injunctive messages and categorised them into 5 classes: Survival, Attachment, Security, Identity and Competence. He defined injunctive messages as "messages emanating from parental figures, often outside their awareness, that are negative in content, often delivered in a context of prohibition, and defeating to the natural life urges of existence, attachment, identity, competence and security." (p.159).

Injunctions/injunctive messages are a hindrance to the natural growth process as they act like the fabled 'curse' that turned the prince into a frog. We might also think of injunctions/injunctive messages as like the chain on an elephant's leg - arresting its freedom and making it forget its strength. Injunctions play a major role in turning princes and princesses into 'frogs'. They are received at a very young age, and it is through the coloured glasses of these that the child continues to perceive the world. That is how they become obstruct-

ions to natural growth. It is an energy source from within to stop activities that can encourage life. In general, we can call it an evil force. The word 'live' spelt backwards is 'evil' - evil is the opposition to live life the way it should be lived. "Evil, then, for the moment, is that force, residing either inside or outside of human beings, that seeks to kill life or liveliness. And goodness is its opposite. Goodness is that which promotes life and liveliness." (Peck 1983 p.42-43).

The 'goodness' available to counter the effects of injunctive messages are permissions. Berne (1972) wrote that "Permissions are the chief therapeutic instrument of the script analyst because they offer the only chance for an outsider to free the patient from the curses laid on him by his parents." (p.151). According to Drego (1996), "permission is a sentence that gives you life and energy together with a good warm feeling."(p.9).

Finally, Crossman (1966) defined permission as "a particular transaction that occurs between therapist and patient at a particular point in therapy, whereby the therapist effects a change in the direction of the patient's behaviour or attitude which before that time would have seemed either impossible or untenable." (p.142). Crossman also stressed the significance of providing protection alongside any permissions conveyed to clients.

### Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

"Human life will never be understood unless its highest aspirations are taken into account. Growth, self-actualization, striving toward health, the quest for identity, and autonomy". (Maslow 1954 p.xii). Maslow proposed that human motivation is based on needs. He listed some of the needs of human beings from his clinical experiences and other known facts at the time of publication, showing basic human needs as:

- **Biological and physiological needs** - When the physiological homeostasis is disturbed the organism feels the need in the form of hunger, thirst, etc. Air, water, food, sex, and sleep are basic biological requirements for survival. Also, there is a need for excretion of waste from the body. Maslow says, "A person who is lacking food, safety, love, and esteem would most probably hunger for food more strongly than for anything else."(1954, p.37].
- **Safety needs** – Need for security, stability, dependency, protection, freedom from fear, from anxiety and chaos, need for structure, order, law, etc. If the safety needs are not fulfilled the receptors, effectors, and intellect of the organism will be functioning as safety-seeking tools.
- **Love and belonging needs** – "If both physiological and safety needs are fairly well

gratified there will emerge the love and affection and belongings need". (1954 p 43). Human organisms will actively seek relationships, friendship, intimacy, trust, and acceptance, etc.

- **Esteem needs** – Esteem needs include the need for achievement, mastery, independence, status, prestige, respect, and recognition from others, etc. The need for a high evaluation of self and the need for self-respect and self-esteem is in this class of need.
- **Self-actualization needs** - Realising one's potential, seeking personal growth and peak experiences. A process of growing to the fullest possibility of the individual.

### Combining Theories

#### GK Frame and Injunctions

When the classification of injunctions is interpolated with the basic diagrams of the GK Frame, some interesting insights about human nature emerged. For survival, human beings need to interact with others on a continuous basis. Survival, attachment and security injunctions can be logically placed on the relationship side of the GK Frame. It is interesting to see most of the injunctions fall in this area of human activity. Rationality is the indispensable requirement for achieving competence. So the competence injunctions are aligned in the rationality side of the frame. Achieved goals are attributed as the individual's identity by society and by self; so the identity injunction can be placed on the identity side of the frame. (Figure 2).

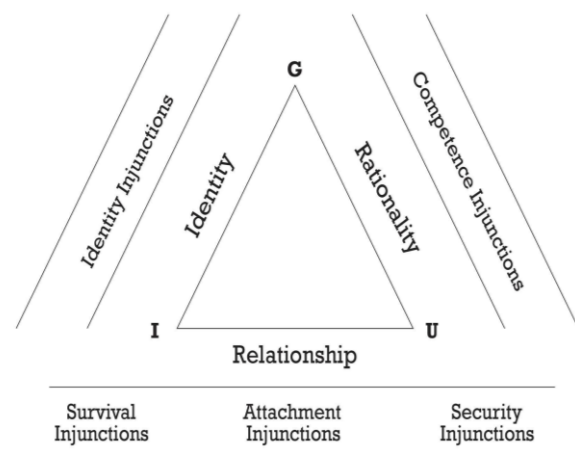


Figure 2: GK Frame with Relationship Injunctions

When this combination is used in the context of counselling, the first step is to identify to which side of the GK Frame the problem belongs. Then the counsellor can look for the presence of corresponding

injunctions. After identifying the problem, it is easy to define it, make a contract and enter into problem-solving steps. In short, this can be used as a diagnosing tool.

Problems on one side of the GK Frame could cause problems on the other sides. For example, teenagers while facing identity issues may have strained relationships. At the same time, the competence level also may suffer. By analysing more and more injunctions/GK combinations; developmental crises can be predicted with more accuracy. A practical method to approach the core issue can be devised by working on it from the injunction or injunctive messages.

Further extending this triangle we can add corresponding injunctions alongside corresponding sections. (Figure 3). As seen from Figure 3, most of the human problems lie in the relationship side of GK Frame.

### GK Frame and Maslow's Hierarchy

Although Maslow never used a pyramid diagram, this diagrammatic representation has often been used and helps to visualise the theory. Figure 4 suggests some blocks that might happen in each level:

- A reverse engineering assumption indicates that a person with more survival injunctions may be affected by somatic symptoms, because blockage is on bodily needs.

- Some behaviours, like reluctance to spend money or other resources, could be related to unfulfilled safety needs.
- People with attachment injunctions could have trouble with intimate relations and friendships. The wrong way of relating to others is one of the major reasons for conflicts in families.
- People who have trouble in the rationality side of the GK frame would have problems in academic and other competency levels. Rather than looking at improving rationality, it would be more effective to work with competence injunctions, by providing necessary permissions in that area.
- People with Identity injunctions could have difficulty in truly identifying who they are, and may have troubles with actualisation of personal potential. This area is also closely related with spiritual development of the individual.

### Usefulness of combining theories

Motivation is like an upward pulling force that accelerates human growth, A natural rule of growth is to self-actualise and attain full growth potential, which is well explained in Maslow's theory. On the other hand, injunctions are the stopping messages to the natural growth of a child, provided by its parents and society. The messages are internalised as the child grows, so the injunction works as a limiting force from within. Permission removes the blocks caused by injunctions.

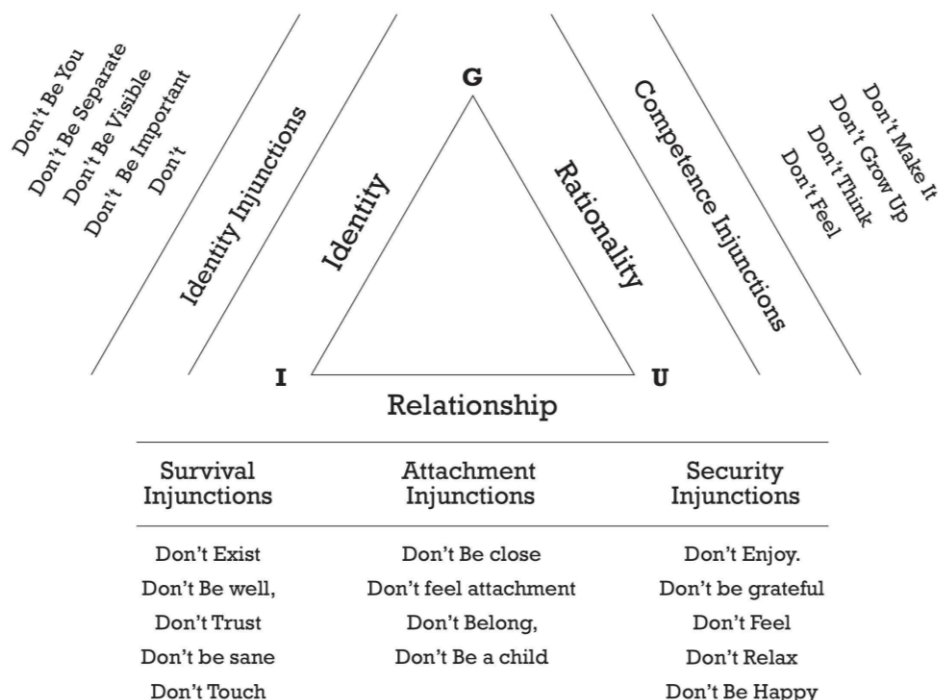
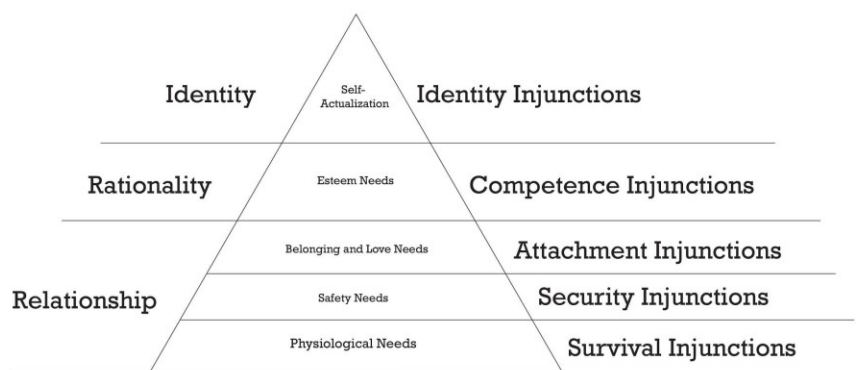


Figure 3: GK Frame with Identity and Competence Injunctions



**Figure 4: Maslow's Hierarchy and Injunctions**

Maslow pointed out that individuals may move onto higher levels without satisfying lower levels, such as an artist self-actualising to paint even though they lack food. We might also consider why people do not progress to areas of higher needs even after fulfilling all their basic needs. For example, a person who worked for 30 years abroad and earned sufficient money but is still postponing retirement and being together with family. Sometimes, people reaching the higher areas of the triangle happen to have great falls in their lives, such as a nearly self-actualised teacher sexually abusing a student. It is difficult to find answers to such human behaviours from the hierarchy of levels. The combination of injunction theory and GK Frame can provide a better framework to understand, explain, predict, and change some of these complex human behaviours.

### A Case Study Example

Motivations, injunctions and permissions are subjective. The above-mentioned combinations of theoretical frameworks can be useful in objectively evaluating these concepts. The following elements of a case study are provided to illustrate these concepts and their practical application.

Client: Tresa a 26-year-old unmarried women research scholar was having a sleepwalking problem. The problem was more frequent when she was stressed. Also, she was not able to clear some of the examinations even after a sufficient amount of hard work. She was missing the target by very small margins on every attempt.

The Drego Injunction Scale (Drego 1996) was used and Don't think, Don't make it, and Don't feel were the top three injunctions. These scores were in agreement with the reported stories by the client. Don't think and Don't make it injunctions are falling on the rationality side of the GK frame and Don't feel injunction on the relationship side. Insights from the injunction test

helped further exploration into the repeated behavioural pattern of the client.

We explored more about her relationship patterns from the perspective of the GK Frame, which is of course illustrating the basic concepts of triology. She reported having a good relationship with her mother. However, she added, "Mother was good at studies as a child, but she could not go beyond primary school". When Tresa was six years old, her sister was born and after this, she felt "neglected" by her mother. Tresa was sent away to stay at her mother's sister's home for schooling. Throughout her education period she was away from home and later staying in hostels.

Tresa reported that she always has some or other kind of "dependent" relationships. During her graduation and postgraduation courses, she had relationships with three different boyfriends, one after the other. She said she used to leave each one before they could leave her. Tresa said she suffered more sleepwalking sessions during the time of breakups with her boyfriends. Also, she realised these relationships affected her performance in examinations. These findings are in line with the information that Tresa has Don't feel, a security injunction that lies on the relationship side of the GK Frame. Tresa also reported that during vacations she used to leave home to go back to the hostel one day earlier than it was required for some unknown reasons. Both statements indicate some issues with the security part of Tresa's relationships.

One of her childhood memories is that after the baby sister's birth, Tresa was made to sleep alone in a small cot which was put near to the cot where her mother, father, and baby were sleeping. She said her cot was so small that her father could not sleep on it. When she felt afraid, her father used to extend his hand towards Tresa so that she can hold it and sleep. One night Tresa felt lonely and frightened, and she cried.



Everyone was sleeping, so she took her father's hand and placed it on her cheek, hoping that he would feel her tears, but he was sleeping and did not respond to Tresa's sorrow. She felt angry and sad and threw his hand away. While narrating this incident, she was sobbing like a child. Tresa realised this was the pattern she followed when she rejects boyfriends before they can reject her. Also, she remembered the frightening dreams which deprived her of sleep.

Further exploration into the childhood of the client revealed new insights about her relationship with her mother. Her mother used to encourage Tresa to study well - however, she remembered the mother's disappointment about not able to complete her own studies. This might be the reason for the client receiving the Don't Make it Injunction. Getting involved in distracting relationships during examinations could have been her way to obey this injunction.

The systematic approach of exploring one side of the GK frame at a time made it easy to collect more information about the non-verbal and forgotten events of the client's childhood. In Tresa's case a session focused on her relationship with her mother revealed a lot of insights to her unconscious patterns.

The use of GK Frame and injunction scales together could dig deeper into the repressed areas of the human mind and help to reveal long-forgotten unpleasant childhood experiences in a focused manner. These insights will help clients to help themselves effectively. For a therapist, these are precious guidelines that can help in planning the therapy procedures.

## Permission

Finally, there are three attributes we can show on the GK Frame that can make the therapist more potent in providing permission, as shown in Figure 5:

- **Love** is a great force that connects the permission giver and taker. The relationship that is the base of the GK Frame is an important aspect for the permission to be effective. Unconditional love is the purest form of relationship. Unconditional acceptance by the therapist helps clients to rework the problem areas of their childhood relationships. Peck (1983) defined love as "The will to extend oneself for the purpose of nurturing oneself or another's spiritual growth". (p.119).
- **Hope** given through permission is effective in clearing distorted thought processes that are hampering rationality. The hope may be seen as a suggestion towards goal completion. Hope will show psychological images of the goal achieved, which will induce calmness in the person that will enable them to think clearly and act peacefully.
- **Trust** is another aspect that helps permission to work well. When unconditional trust is extended, it works on the identity of the person. The person realises their self-worth. Also, it helps resolve identity confusion when they realise that another person simply believes them.

Love is in the relationship side of GK Frame. Hope is pointing to the goal and rationality side. Trust is all about believing the capacity of the individual and it lies on the identity side of the GK Frame. Permission given with Love, Hope and Trust is more effective.

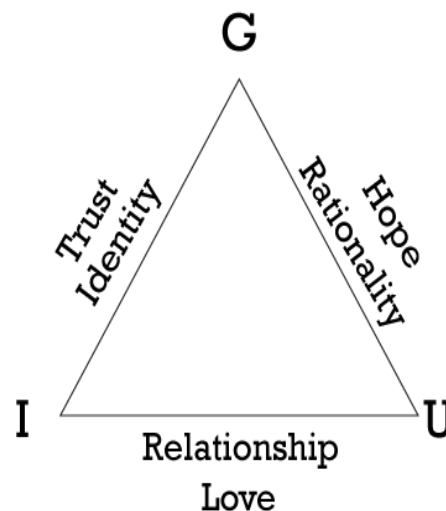


Figure 5: GK Frame and Permissions

Incidentally, spirituality also highlights the importance of love, hope, and trust in the evolution of people into their higher selves. Careful scrutiny may reveal that the GK Frame is a theoretical framework that connects psychology with spirituality. All world religions are instituted with the purpose of improving spiritual growth. The violence in the name of religion begins when the intentions go wrong. When it has wrong notions about love, a religion divorces itself from spirituality, and that is where religious violence begins. This fact is well recorded in the history of religions throughout the world.

## Conclusion

The combination of the GK frame with injunctions/injunctive messages and Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be used as a model for both practitioner and client to investigate how childhood experiences, whether related to parents or the culture, have led to current difficulties for the client. Permissions can be more appropriately crafted and targeted to specific client needs.

It seems to me also that these models connect the concepts of TA with spirituality. Explorations on the

identity side of the GK frame can lead to understanding about spiritual evolution of the person.

Although the material presented in this article has not been researched, and there are only brief details of using the model in analysis of a single case study, I hope that enough information has been included so that other practitioners may begin to use these ideas. I look forward to receiving information from my colleagues as they apply these ideas.

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## The TAMED Game, Bystanders and Professional Associations

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### Abstract

*The author introduces a psychological game named TAMED – the TA Myth of Explanatory Depth, which she suggests provides an explanation of unhealthy dynamics occurring within transactional analysis membership and professional associations. She illustrates this with four case examples based on personal experiences. She also provides an overview of TA theory about psychological games, the bystander role, the various roles within the drama triangle and extensions of it, and the potency pyramid. She provides a selection of materials by TA and non-TA authors to support the premise that such games are more to do with organisational and group processes than the script of the individual who is seen as the cause of the conflict. The article concludes with some initial thoughts about how TA organisational diagrams need amending to reflect the structure and dynamics of professional associations.*

### Key words

TAMED, psychological games, role lock, potency pyramid, drama triangle, bystander, organisational cone, professional associations

### Introduction

I have chosen to set the scene by including an email below as Illustration 1, in the hope that it will help the reader understand why the rest of the article has been written.

In this article I will use case examples to show how the application uncritically of Berne's original material leads to a game called TAMED - the TA Myth of Explanatory Depth. I believe there is a serious risk to the reputation of TA when we discount that Eric Berne was sexist and homophobic. The excuse that this was typical of the time is not enough of a justification. He produced some amazingly useful material and I cannot believe that he would have maintained the same views had he lived beyond 1970.

A common example is the way in which TA practitioners continue to refer to games in more or less the same way that Berne did, including referring to Rapo, NIGYSOB and Wooden Leg (Berne, 1961), which are clearly misleading and/or offensive names. I renamed these many years ago – respectively as Rebuff, Gotcha (Hay, 1993) and Millstone (Hay, 1995). It is not difficult to capture the same dynamics with a different label.

Name changes such as these are at about the same level as us changing from Chairman to Chairperson; the problem is in the psychological level of the implication. I think there are more serious dynamics occurring around the ways in which TA practitioners level the accusation of game playing when we disagree with someone else's perspective and seem determined to avoid any logical problem-solving interaction. Events over the last few years within the TA community have prompted me to consider the ways in which such accusations are made, without any apparent recognition that if someone else is playing a game with them, they must also be playing the game – or they must at least be bystanders within the negative meaning of that term. It seemed to me that that these events could be explained by what Rozenblit & Keil (2002) called the illusion of explanatory depth. Hence my decision to call this game TAMED - the TA Myth of Explanatory Depth.

As I write this, I am conscious that I may be engaging in SPOT – Spontaneous Preference for Own Theories – described by Gregg, Mahadevan and Sedikides (2017) and referred to by them as how their research subjects "regarded the theory as more likely to be true when it was arbitrarily ascribed to them" (p. 996), rather than ascribed to another person or to no-one. I invite you to consider whether you might be doing the same, and how I and those involved in the 'stories' I tell below might also have been engaging in SPOT. Perhaps this is the process through which TAMED operates.

## Julie Hay

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**From:** Julie Hay <julie@juliehay.org>  
**Sent:** 05 May 2020 17:15  
**To:** 'Peter Rudolph'; 'Elana Leigh'; Diane Salters (disalters15@gmail.com); 'Anna Krieb'; 'Bev Gibbons'; 'Chitra Ravi'; 'John Oates'; 'Heather Fowlie'; 'Annie Rogers'  
**Cc:** Lynda Tongue (Lynda@trianglepartnership.com); Sandra Wilson (sandra@icbcoaching.com); 'Susan Arslan'; Heidi Amey (heidi.amey70@gmail.com); Carol Faulkner (carol.faulkner56@googlemail.com)  
**Subject:** In desperation  
**Attachments:** Engagement letter Begbies Traynor.pdf

Today I am sending the proposed announcement below only to those who signed the Announcement cancelling the conference, and copying it only to the WTAC2020 Organising Committee.

I realise that some of you may not be familiar with UK law so can only assume that there has been some huge misunderstanding or incorrect legal advice given to you.

Depending on the responses I receive within the next 24 hours, I will be making the information more widely available.

I cannot delay signing the insolvency document beyond Friday morning UK time unless I get some indication that the conference can be postponed.

I am not willing to allow a situation to continue in which it appears as if I and the Organising Committee have somehow been at fault.

Julie

### **In desperation**

One final try before I sign the attached paperwork and we waste most of the UKP 110 000 still in the bank on insolvency lawyers' fees and **over 550 people are left with little or no refunds and a really bad feeling about TA associations.**

The associations authorised us to set up the limited company so that UKATA would not face the total financial risk. As director, I have no choice but to behave in line with UK law. When I advised people that refunds would be available, and when I gave refunds before coronavirus emerged, I had no idea that the associations would use a legal loophole to avoid their responsibilities - and no idea that coronavirus would happen – I had personally arranged conference cancellation insurance, having spent 24-hours in Mumbai airport before returning home when the conference in India was flooded.

The first negotiation that the Organising Committee were authorised to conduct had removed the risk of insolvency, which returned when the Associations refused to stand by what they had previously confirmed in writing.

We negotiated again, got agreement from Hilton to postpone, and we already have nearly 300 people who have confirmed their payments can be transferred for attendance in 2023. **They will all have to pay again if the insolvency proceeds.**

Thanks to those who have agreed to postpone, **we have enough money in the bank to pay full refunds to everyone else who needs them.**

**We can only give those refunds on the basis that around 300 people have accepted a guaranteed place in 2023.** ITAA/EATA/FTAA/UKATA/IARTA have announced that they will favour the UK for the conference in 2023 but have refused to postpone the existing conference. They have given no explanation for this decision, which means we must now include those 300 people within the calculations for refunds, which means that the limited company is again insolvent.

**It is now the puzzling decision by ITAA/EATA/FTAA/UKATA/IARTA to cancel rather than postpone the conference that will lead to everyone who has paid receiving very small or no refunds of their payments.**

This applies whether the Hilton Metropole is open in July 2020 or not.

*For anyone who has already applied for a refund when they saw the cancellation announcement, I had no choice but to close down the bank account because I am required under UK law to ensure that all creditors are treated equally – which means that after the liquidation fees have been paid, they will all get only the same small or zero percentage of what they paid, which will then be halved if the Metropole are open in July 2020.*

### **Illustration 1: Email to Association Presidents**

I am also recognising that I may be Rescuing (Karpman 1968) because I am aware that recognising TAMED is even more important when the individual accused of playing the game is leading projects within the TA community. This is because the public accusations exert psychological pressure on the volunteers involved in those projects to 'choose sides' and to risk being accused themselves. This is of course a strong incentive not to challenge any TA leadership figures, especially because of the unconscious power hierarchy within the TA community based on people's TA qualifications. I recall that many years ago a friend and colleague apologised for being unwilling to nominate me in the election for ITAA President because one of those I would be running against might one day be on their exam board.

I am also recalling that during my childhood my father frequently told me that I was the cause of the negative dynamic between him and my mother (screaming rows although not about me). When I learned TA, I realised that it was not true that any child is to blame for what adults do. However, as my mother become older and reminisced, I learned how I 'had' been the cause. He had told my mother that he did not want children, probably claiming it was because he was a soldier in a war. I doubt he realised that his own childhood had left him needing to get the attachment he had been denied. My mother wanted a baby so she ignored him. She went ahead and got pregnant (I do realise he contributed to that process!).

He was away for most of the next three years, so returned at the end of World War 2 to find that my mother now refused to accompany him when he played drums in a small band. I'm pretty sure she had hated sitting there alone before and used the excuse that she now had a child and good parents did not use babysitters. In addition to telling me it was my fault, he added physical to the psychological abuse. He did this in ways that did not show. When I reacted, he claimed innocence and my mother did not believe me. As you read on, you will see that my childhood strategy for dealing with being blamed is somehow evident to others who unconsciously need to bully someone about their own problematic group dynamics. It is as if I invite others not to believe me unless they are close enough to be like my brother and (very young) uncle, who knew what was happening, had their own issues, and were in any case powerless to intervene. I doubt I am the only volunteer to find their childhood history repeated, although I may be unusual in that I am less concerned with the 'seduction of normativity', which Minikin (2021) describes as underlying systemic power because "we are relationally bound with context and the wider systems in which we live." (p.36). I prefer her comments about rebellion offering critical thinking and challenging the dynamics of discounting.

Increasingly, as I have been completing this article, I have begun to notice other indications of 'unfortunate' dynamics within the TA community. McKinnon Fathi (2017) defined gaslighting as "a psychological process of manipulation designed to undermine the victim's perception of reality. Its goal is to exert control; it is an attack on the soul. Creating doubt by blurring the truth, it happens in interpersonal relationships but also in social contexts." (p.29). During 2021, several authors have written within the TA literature about bullying and I will refer to this later in terms of whether TAMED, and bullying, are really psychological games.

Cornell (2020) has written that "For societies to succeed, to mature, to be truly safe, we must have leadership that is capable of self-examination and that models the capacity to look at ourselves for solutions rather than to others. We need leadership that leads through introspection and acceptance of responsibility rather than projection and assignment of blame." (p.6). This was followed two months later by Minikin and Rowland (2020) inviting contributions to a future theme issue of the *Transactional Analysis Journal* based on Systemic Oppression: What Part Do We Play? Their comments include that "Inevitably, those in charge activate individual scripting and co-create scripts that promote their survival. We have seen many examples of how oppression can be the outcome of how those with power seek to retain through structures, processes, and psychological influence." (p. 9). A later invitation by the same authors (Minikin and Rowland 2021) includes prompts about "our institutional challenges, capacities and approaches to leadership... how we may consciously and unconsciously feel systemic oppression by oppressing each other in our interpersonal dealings... [and]... in what ways have we colluded with our structural and psychological processes?" (p.49). (The closing date for submissions is not until August 2021 so I await with interest what will be published.)

In terms of the context, I have also noticed that the transactional analysis associations are not alone. The British Psychological Society (BPS) have recently announced that their President Elect has been expelled after two independent external investigations upheld allegations of persistent bullying. The interim Chair of the Board of Trustees comments on this being "turbulent times, as the organisation goes through a process of significant and much needed transformation while also experiencing vigorous debate on complex and contentious issues." (McGuinness, 2021, p.4), before going on to refer to the need for stronger governance processes and being more transparent. Comments from BPS members in response to the announcement include challenges about the public shaming and career destroying communications, position the expelled individual as a

whistle-blower, and mention major issues of governance and mismanagement.

Also outside the TA community, INSEAD Distinguished Clinical Professor of Leadership Development and Organisational Change Kets de Vries (2021) has urged us to curb our addiction to charismatic leaders who are empowered by impressionable followers. He asks if we know the name of any recent president of Switzerland, explaining that they rotate on a yearly basis. It is interesting to consider that EATA is legally based in Switzerland but the EATA Council are proposing a change to the statutes so that the EATA President can in future served two terms of office of three years each – so someone can function as president of a whole country for a year, but to lead an association of about 8000 members needs six years.

## Case Examples

I am using personal experiences of four incidents in the form of case studies. I will describe them before going on to provide an overview of the TA theories of psychological games, the bystander role, and the drama triangle and potency pyramid. I am well aware that these incidents have happened because I have chosen to follow TA Professional Practices and confront colleagues when I thought it was necessary to maintain professional standards in our behaviour with each other. This is not meant in any way to be seen as challenging any colleagues about their professionalism with clients. This article includes discussion of actions by individuals within their roles; names are only included as references when some of those individuals are the authors of material cited.

### ITAA Ethics Case

I first began to have serious concerns about these dynamics within the TA community when I was asked, in January 2016, by an ITAA Ethics Committee Co-Chair to serve as a consultant to an individual engaged in making complaints about a number of individuals, associated with a CTA exam process. I have the permission of the complainant to share the information that follows, although I am ignoring a threat made at the end of the process by the Co-Chair of dire consequences if I communicated with anyone else about the matter.

By the time the complaints process ended four years after it began, the complainant had given up because only four out of 12 complaints had been considered, with one upheld and three dismissed, and the complainant told that he was not allowed to have any more information than those results. During the time I served as consultant, I discovered that the original complaints, which were about events leading up to and following a declaration of a no-exam, had been successively rejected as a complaint about exam processes because there was no recording of an

exam, even though the complaint was not about what happened during an exam; had then been rejected as a Professional Practices matter; had eventually reached ITAA President; the complainant had then been told to submit it as an Ethics complaint; and had finally been told that he must submit a separate (lengthy) form for each individual named even though the complaint was about the result of the sequence of events.

I also noted that several of the people complained about were members of ITAA Board of Trustees and/or the ITAA Ethics Committee. It seemed to me that this should have triggered something about an independent process. I was subsequently accused of being a whistle-blower (as if this was negative), in spite of having only communicated with people who had prior involvement because of the ITAA roles that they held. These accusations were made after I had pointed out at various times that:

- I was being expected to act as a negotiator on behalf of ITAA instead of supporting the complainant;
- I questioned why my TA colleagues were now facing ethics charges when the original complaint had been about procedural matters and the complainant had been forced to present them as ethical issues;
- I objected to ITAA 'bullying' the complainant by involving a lawyer and advising him that he should engage his own lawyer, with obvious cost implications;
- I queried why the complainant was made a financial offer that would have covered the costs to take the exam in another country, but only if he withdrew the complaints.

### The Manifesto

Around the same time that I became involved in the above case, in 2016 some TA colleagues published a Manifesto that likened the behaviours of refugees and politicians to playing psychological games. To me, this overlooked the realities of being bombed, raped, and having your children kidnapped. As Sedgwick (2021) explains, "a disproportionate amount of our clinical literature continues to be based on the sliver of individuals who have the means and willingness to pay privately for open-ended therapy. Few have seriously contemplated the possibility that theories based on work with affluent, educated, psychologically-minded, cultural-majority clients doesn't automatically generalise outwards to provide either a universal understanding of human experience or treatment practices..." (p.5). I remember protesting that murder and rape are not always psychological games - there are real victims!

The Manifesto was issued on behalf of the entire TA community, using the trademark three stacked circles.

It claimed that politicians and refugees were playing a psychological game, as indicated in the following quotation: " We would like to see the situation we are in as a (psychological) game "hors catégorie" (Cornell et al., 2016). Hundreds of people—perpetrators and victims— have died. Thousands of people—again, perpetrators and victims—have been wounded. Millions of people—perpetrators and victims—are afraid. We are afraid. This fear creates a vicious circle (a game). It is time to do whatever is possible (to break this cycle.)" (p. 8). When I first saw a draft version of the Manifesto, I acted in line with TA Professional Practices and immediately challenged the originators direct but received no response. I was very concerned to see that a short time later it had become the official policy of ITAA and EATA, having been signed by the Presidents of both associations, and having been circulated by them. I was not aware of any consultation processes within those associations so I protested. The Manifesto was published on a website so I published an alternative website to host objections to it. Eventually the original website disappeared.

### **The Journal**

This was followed in 2017 when I changed the nature of the *International Journal of TA Research* (IJTAR) to include *Practice* (IJTARP). I had been appointed Editor by EATA, launched the journal and had been the Editor since its inauguration in 2009. In 2012 I had attended as a guest an EATA Council meeting at which was submitted a proposal for a change of content of the journal to include Practice. The proposal had been cowritten by me and the EATA President at the time, my attendance and purpose was clearly shown on the Agenda, and I partially actioned the proposal in the following year with no apparent query. However, when in 2017 I actioned the decision more definitely (because it was a choice of that or no issue because we had insufficient research articles), I learned that someone within EATA Council had complained about the changes and that the Executive Committee had responded that it was my own decision and they had not discussed it. This was in spite of the fact that I had checked with them months before and they had approved the implementation of the decision. It was also in spite of the fact that this information had, as far as I knew, been circulated to the entire EATA Council before the meeting.

EATA Ethics Adviser subsequently suggested I could use an Organisational Complaint procedure. This procedure was not publicly available and did not appear on the EATA website until July 2020; there is still no indication of at which EATA Council meeting it was approved. The process began with the EATA President and Executive Committee at the time; during the process several individuals changed, although that did not appear to make any difference to the dynamics that played out.

The result of the complaint procedure was an Arbitration Report which contained numerous inaccuracies. The Arbitrator clearly believed that as an individual I was the same size of organisation as EATA, and that EATA ran like an organisation with paid employees. The Arbitrator decided that there were no records of the 2012 decision; after which it became clear that there were no records in Council minutes about anything linking the journal to EATA in spite of several EATA Presidents having signed four-year contracts with me as the Editor. I pointed out many factual errors, such as stating that I had not made my complaint clear when that complaint was quoted elsewhere within the report. However, no changes were made and, when I continued to protest, the EATA Ethics Adviser published the results on the Ethics Page of the EATA Newsletter and offered to provide a copy of the confidential report to anyone who requested it (redacted but obviously my name was known already). The Arbitrator placed a Binding Condition on EATA Council as well as on me; EATA Council have still not complied. They also failed to recruit a replacement Editor so that I stepped back into that role rather than see the work of the authors disappear. As you will see as you read this article, IJTARP still exists although without any support from EATA.

### **World TA Conference**

In spite of my previous experiences, I agreed to lead the Organising Committee for the World TA Conference 2020 (WTAC2020). There was a very clear contract with six different TA associations about how this would be organised and how the profits or losses would be shared between those associations. We were well on track to have 1000 participants when coronavirus emerged during March 2020. The associations authorised us to organise an alternative online conference in case it should be needed. However, participants began to demand refunds of their booking fees and some of their money had already been spent on things like hotel deposits, IT and clerical support. We had been authorised by the UK-based associations to set up a limited company in the UK, to protect UKATA (UK Association for TA) from financial liability if something untoward happened that was not covered by conference cancellation insurance. We did this because previous TA conferences had been disrupted by terrorism and flooding, although we had no idea at the time that it would be coronavirus, nor that infectious diseases would not be covered by conference cancellation insurance.

After coronavirus emerged, at various times we requested emergency financial assistance of around €30,000 when EATA had €300,000 in the bank, we negotiated a postponement with the conference hotel that was supported by the majority of the participants

and would have allowed us to give refunds to the others, and we were intending to provide a free online conference to participants and were receiving further bookings. At that point, five of the associations issued an announcement that the conference was cancelled. This was done in spite of the fact that they had authorised us, in writing, to negotiate with the conference hotel, and promised they would support whatever transpired. They had also authorised us to organise the online conference.

We had been doing all of that in spite of EATA President accusing me of playing a psychological game when I first requested assistance from the TA associations responsible. That accusation was never withdrawn. It was interesting that EATA President did this by circulating an email containing his agreement with a comment made by the Chair of the World TA Organising Committee ; when I queried this with that colleague the response was that it was a private conversation and he did not expect me to find out what he had said.

When the request for support was reiterated by the IDTA President, the other associations simply ignored her emails and subsequently IDTA was excluded from future decision-making by the other five associations with whom they had signed the contract. When the announcement appeared that the conference was cancelled, I was legally obliged under UK law to put the limited company into insolvency. When they then announced that the online conference no longer had their support, all keynote and several other speakers withdrew. The associations are now claiming that they protected the participants' money but in fact they reduced it because the insolvency specialists will have deducted for their time spent in meetings with this Creditors Committee, which cannot in any case change the strict UK law about insolvency.

### **Punitive Elements**

During the Ethics Case, the punitive elements occurred during and just after the process ended. I was labelled a whistle-blower and threatened with TA 'excommunication' if I did not keep quiet. The complainant had by then walked away from the TA community so I kept quiet.

After many colleagues had supported my protest about the Manifesto, the Dutch TA Association cancelled their agreement with me to be the keynote speaker at their 40-year celebration, in an email sent by one of the originators of the Manifesto.

I have no way of knowing who has copies of the confidential Arbitration Report that resulted from my organisational complaint. However, the Ethics page in the EATA Newsletter is now available on [www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu), which has 157 million registered

users who can access the report about me that conflates an organisational complaint with an ethical issue.

Since WTAC2020 was cancelled, the associations continue to issue statements that give the impression that the loss of money to all participants is not because those associations cancelled the conference. ITAA President wrote that "I felt proud and moved at the most recent meeting with the presidents of all the responsible associations because everyone there reflected on what we could have done differently and how we could make conscious and unconscious meanings from the crisis. There was not a trace of defensiveness and scapegoating but rather a collective feeling of goodwill and determination to honour our responsibilities to the membership at large." (Leigh, 2020, p.5). Just before that, she wrote that she is "aware of the importance of you, the membership, feeling informed in ways that settle and satisfy you. When that is not forthcoming, it can become another shadow in our history that may render us vulnerable to further enactments." (p.5). There is no mention of any contact with the Organising Committee members or with the IDTA President, even though the article is headed Bonds That Hold Us Together.

At the time when cancellation was being threatened, I sent an email headed 'In Desperation', which is now included at the beginning of this article. You will see that I sent this to the decision-makers. Two days later I received a personally critical email from the German TA Association (DGTA). Two months later I received a very similar email from the Swedish TA Association (STAF). Some of the associations continue to issue statements. I estimated a long time ago that refunds via insolvency would be about 20% - they have been announced as 22%. More information is available in the March 2021 IDTA Newsletter at [http://www.instdta.org/uploads/1/2/3/8/12385375/idta\\_news\\_mar\\_2021.pdf](http://www.instdta.org/uploads/1/2/3/8/12385375/idta_news_mar_2021.pdf). The log I was advised to maintain by the insolvency advisors as Director of the limited company can be seen at <http://bit.ly/WTAC2020DirectorLog>. I was the only director left because the original UKATA and IARTA directors accepted my offer to continue alone when we realise that insolvency might be needed.

There have been no responses so far to requests by others to conduct independent reviews, of the events with the journal or the conference.

### **Psychological Games**

Although I will now describe some of the TA material about games, and related to the case examples I have described, I will be inviting you below to consider whether TAMED is really a psychological game or part of the systemic context of a professional association.



## What Berne Wrote

The first reference to the term 'games' seems to have appeared in Berne (1958), reproduced in Berne (1977) after the publication of several books by Berne and others. In that original article, Berne (1958) wrote that "Short sets of ongoing transactions may be called operations." and "A series of operations constitutes a "game." A game may be defined as a recurring series of transactions, often repetitive, superficially rational, with a concealed motivation or more colloquially, a series of operations with a "gimmick." (p. 152 in Berne 1977). He illustrated this with a game of 'Yes, but...' being played within a therapy group, explaining that the gimmick "is that it is played not for its ostensible purpose (a quest for information or solutions), but for the sake of the fencing..." (p. 153) between the players as the one who is 'it' successfully objects to any solutions offered by the others. It would seem that the Presidents of the TA associations that cancelled WTAC2020 objected to many options, even after they had authorised the Organising Committee to undertake them (including the online conference) or to negotiate them (including the postponement until 2023).

In the same article, Berne refers to other common games and represents games with a transactional diagram that shows an Adult-Adult stimulus and response at the social level, and a Child-Parent interaction at the psychological level, using dotted lines for the latter. He also illustrates it in terms of therapeutic effect by showing a Parent-Adult contamination for those offering the solutions, which was resolved once the players became aware of the dynamics of the game. Later Berne (1961) used slightly amended diagrams to illustrate games, combining social and psychological levels into one diagram.

He also illustrated the gains from game playing, going on to amend this by the time he wrote *Games People Play* (Berne 1964) to be:

- *external psychological advantage* - as the avoidance of the feared situation;
- *internal psychological advantage* - maintaining the psychic economy such as avoiding experiencing neurotic fears and meeting masochistic needs;
- *internal social advantage* - a way of structuring time;
- *external social advantage* - the opportunity for pastiming with others;
- *biological advantage* - the parties stimulating each other and removing each other's isolation, explained in terms of strokes;

- *existential advantage* - the reinforcement of [life] position.

In 1961 he concluded with a section of Notes in which he commented that he had often been asked for a list of games, for which he had only a partial and provisional response. He went on to give several game names. In 1964 he provided details of a number of games under the headings of: life games, marital games, party games, sexual games, underworld games, consulting room games and good games. In between, in 1963 he explained the original technical meaning of gimmick as "a device placed behind the Wheel of Fortune so that the operator could stop it in order to prevent the player from winning. Thus it is the hidden snare which is controlled by the operator and assures him of an advantage in the pay-off. It's the "con" that leads to the "sting." (p. 156). Note that this description conflates gimmick and con, reinforcing the notion that every party to a game has hooks like matching pieces of Velcro (Hay 2012) that join together so we cannot claim that someone else is playing a game with us as if we are not doing the same. Berne's metaphor of games being like roulette wheels implies that the operator and the player are both intending to take part in what follows, although it may be that the player believes the reputable casino does not have any gimmicks installed.

He defined a game in 1964 as "an ongoing series of complementary ulterior transactions progressing to a well-defined, predictable outcome. Descriptively it is a recurring set of transactions, often repetitious, superficially plausible, with a concealed motivation; or, more colloquially, a series of moves with a snare, or 'gimmick'." (p. 44). He differentiated games from procedures, rituals and pastimes by their ulterior quality and the payoff, adding that every game is basically dishonest and the outcome is dramatic rather than merely exciting. He added that a game looks like a set of operations superficially but that it becomes clear after the payoff that the operations were really manoeuvres. He gives the example of an insurance agent whose congenial participation may conceal a series of skilful manoeuvres aimed at eliciting information so that 'a killing' may be made. He emphasised that 'game' does not necessarily imply fun or even enjoyment, that 'play' is also serious, and that the grimmest game is 'War' – an interesting claim that resonates with Barnes (2004) (below) pointing out that Berne appeared to take little account of contextual circumstances.

Berne also distinguished games as:

"(a) A First-Degree Game is one which is socially acceptable in the agent's circle.

(b) A Second-Degree Game is one from which no permanent irremediable damage arises, but which the players would rather conceal from the public.

(c) A Third-Degree Game is one which is played for keeps, which ends in the surgery, the courtroom or the morgue." (p. 57).

Again, an interesting conception that seems to imply that there is no permanent damage until the level is such that there are serious outcomes, again without any apparent consideration that a third--degree game outcome might also be the result of circumstances. This sequence of levels also seems to imply that games within the TA community around ethics issues are usually second-degree, although publication of the results moves it up but not as far as third-degree. It also seems that cancelling the conference so that UK legal requirements came into effect must be third-degree, although we might think more degrees are needed as 'courtroom ' seems somewhat less serious than 'morgue'.

In the concluding chapters in 1964, Berne wrote that games are passed on from generation to generation, so that game analysis takes place in an historical matrix, and there is a strong tendency to inbreed with people who play a similar game - hence there is an *historical* significance of games. Raising children involves teaching them what games to play – which is the *cultural* significance of games, and games are ways of getting away from the boredom of pastimes without the dangers of intimacy – hence the *social* significance of games. The *personal* significance of games is that we choose as friends others who play the same games. Maybe he should have added that we choose our colleagues in a similar way?

### Playing TAMED

In 2005 Graham Barnes (2004) was given the Eric Berne Memorial Award for pointing out that Berne believed that homosexuality was a game, with no account taken of the reality of the consequences of the cultural context. Aiken (1976) pointed out that telling gay and lesbian people they were playing 'Kick Me' when they were harassed was like saying the Jews were playing a game with Hitler. In the Manifesto those who signed it were accusing all refugees of playing psychological games with all politicians.

Jacobs (1977), who also received the Eric Berne Memorial Award, wrote in his acceptance speech: "The last idea I'd like to discuss briefly is the relationship between theory and ideology. Theories are developed to explain what we perceive. They remain theories until they are proved correct. What happens often is that in our haste to make the world a better place we parentize theory, make it a rule, a morality, the way things really are. And then we require that everyone adhere to this theory. When this

happens we often exclude criticism of it; we exclude Adult information." (p.13). Claiming that someone else is playing a psychological game, within the TA community, makes it very difficult for anyone to challenge that perspective. We would not challenge it when they say it about a client, so we do not expect challenge it when they say it about a colleague.

I am introducing the game label of TAMED to describe situations when a TA professional accuses someone else of playing a game, particularly when they do that rather than announcing that they believe that they themselves are playing a game and they want to stop doing so. Announcing that someone else is playing a game sounds as if the professional somehow knows better than others about some very complex situations. For me, it comes across as if TA is yet another religion, where the followers of TA know better than anybody else what should be done to solve the problems of the world.

It is often accompanied by the frequent use of words such as 'we' and 'all', which seems grandiose, as does claiming that we have 'co-created'. Such comments about being in a psychological game reproduce the same bias that Berne had when he named a game as Rapo i.e. of making no allowance for the fact that women who are raped, and people who are unlucky enough to have been born in an area of the world where others decide to start wars, are not engaging in a psychological game. For me, being a civilian in Syria (or anywhere else where similar conflicts are occurring) does not mean automatically that you have a con or a gimmick, or that you engage in complementary ulterior transactions, or that there is a switch. For me, those caught up in areas of the world where there are conflicts are unlucky in the same sense that those in Japan and Ecuador are unlucky to be living in an area where there are earthquakes.

Writing of the aftermath of the Oklahoma bombing, Allen & Allen (1998) wrote that: "While some people will complete drama triangles in their head, no matter how much we work to avoid this eventuality, would-be helpers can consciously and deliberately work to decrease the intensity and frequency of such phenomena." (p. 207). They added that "We humans seem to need some larger story to make sense of our experiences and into which we can integrate our own personal stories. Since the same event can fit into several different scenarios, each leading to different perceptions, explanations, and courses of action, the role of bystanders and especially of public officials and the media in creating these scenarios is especially worthy of careful study. It is important to support those that are more likely to lead to recovery and healing rather than those that are likely to lead to more suffering. It is troublesome, yet in a way liberating, to realize that any of several different scenarios may

work equally well. They do not have to be truly valid, only feasible and meaningful." (p.208).

If we wish to apply a TA analysis to what is happening, I think we need to allow for the fact that some people just get caught up in events, albeit that others are acting in line with transgenerational scripts – either way, they need help rather than blame. Otherwise, we risk giving the impression that just thinking about, and reflecting on, TA concepts can somehow provide solutions to complex problems that non-TA people struggle with, now and for centuries past.

### The Bystander Role

I believe also that the Bystander role is being misinterpreted. Jacobs (1987) was clearly not referring to those remote from events, when he wrote that "Bystanders watch others eat and are initially outside the development of Master/Follower. They are usually within the same system, be it national, religious or social. ... Often Bystanders are converted and become Followers; others feign conversion in order to avoid persecution." (p. 62).

Clarkson (1987) maintained this link to the actual events when she wrote that: "A Bystander is considered to be a person who does not become actively involved in a situation where someone else requires help. In the literature, the concept of the bystander is consistently applied to describe the behavior of people in emergencies such as the Kitty Genovese murder, where several people witnessed a violent assault without any effective intervention (Latané & Darley, 1970). Where one or more people are in danger, Bystanders therefore could, by taking some form of action, affect the outcome of the situation even if they were not able to avert it. Thus, by definition, anyone who becomes actively involved in a critical situation, whether we describe this choice as pathological (script bound) or autonomous, is not a Bystander." (p. 82).

It is interesting to note that Clarkson shifts from Jacobs' focus on totalitarian cultures into events where the so-called Bystander is still actually present and could directly intervene – and that the Kitty Genovese story she quotes was subsequently exposed as a myth (<http://digest.bps.org.uk/2007/10/truth-behind-story-of-kitty-genovese.html>).

We need to be careful about how we label people as bystanders. In terms of the Manifesto and its comments about refugees, it might be interpreted to mean that if we were in Syria, or Nigeria, or wherever else people were being hurt, and then we did do nothing, we were (probably dead!) Bystanders. I would have thought that Clarkson's comment about affecting the outcome through some form of action means that those who have elected governments that provide aid from their citizen's taxes, or those who donate

personally to charities are not Bystanders and are not in a psychological game.

Perhaps we are Bystanders when we discount the reality situation and ignore the plight of refugees. The publication of the Manifesto on an international TA forum, to which I added comments, prompted a TA colleague to write that: "I think, what the refugees are playing, if any, is, that they are in their habitual behaviour (what else should they know? and ask for help: not suggest solutions,) and that is perceived as threatening in a territorial way. And what they also contribute is, that they pay people, to bring them over illegally and unofficially, before they asked for a place to stay - and this translates badly culturally: we take public or private transport and come across borders with valid papers - hotel booked - why not them? And why do they have the money and want help from us? Why should we share our little goods (if we are poor) with them? So that in my view, this can be called a game (with overt and covert aspects). And for switches: Now I got you; I am only trying to help you; You are so wonderful....?"

My response to this was "I think if someone bombed my home or was forcing children like mine into sexual slavery or to be a child soldier, I would not wait to ask someone I don't even know in another country, and whose language I may not know also, if it was alright if I came to their country - I would gather all the money I had, or could get sent to me by relatives or friends who had escaped previously, to get to somewhere where I hope to be safe. I think we should beware of talking of games to explain why good things happen to bad people and bad things happen to good people."

In terms of outcomes of the publication of the Manifesto, the comments above about refugees staying in their bombed cities until they are invited to travel to safety seems to me to lead to more suffering. In this way, it could be seen that the bystanders signing the Manifesto are the ones who are conjuring up drama triangles in their heads.

I think that the definition of being a bystander is incomplete – it should say something about being a person who has the power to take appropriate action but does not become involved when someone else needs help. Otherwise, everyone in the world is a bystander if they do not become involved in the various conflicts and natural disasters. There are many, including within the TA community, who are taking action within their own power to do so in various situations. Ironically, we need the word 'appropriate' in the definition (although it is probably impossible to know whether something is appropriate or not without the benefit of historical hindsight) because there are many who are taking actions that others criticise – the authorities cannot be considered to be bystanders

even though some may believe that what they are doing is making things worse.

### Potency Pyramid or Drama Triangle

I suggest that another way for us to consider what is happening, before we accuse someone of playing a psychological game, is to check out whether they are operating within the drama triangle (Karpman, 1968) or the potency pyramid (Hay, 2009).

When Karpman introduced the drama triangle, he stated that only three roles were necessary to depict the dramatic emotional reversals that come with switches in the roles. He used stories, such as Little Red Riding Hood starting as Rescuer, becoming Victim to the Wolf Persecutor, who in turn becomes Victim to the woodsman Persecutor, who also Rescues Little Red Riding Hood and grandmother; with a further example of the Pied Piper, where the hero begins as Rescuer of the city and Persecutor of the rats, then becomes Victim to the Persecutor Mayor who refuses to pay the fee, and then switches to Persecutor of the city and its children. The mayor moves from Rescuer when hiring the Pied Piper, to Persecutor and then to Victim when the children are dead. The children switch from Victims being Persecuted by rats, to Rescued Victims by the Pied Piper, and finally to Persecuted Victims. Of course, if these fairy stories were true, then no game is being played.

Karpman gives a similar account of the story of Cinderella, indicating that counting the number of switches in a story will give a rough quantitative analysis of the intensity of the drama. However, he points out that games are simpler and have only one major switch, or one major rotation around the drama triangle.

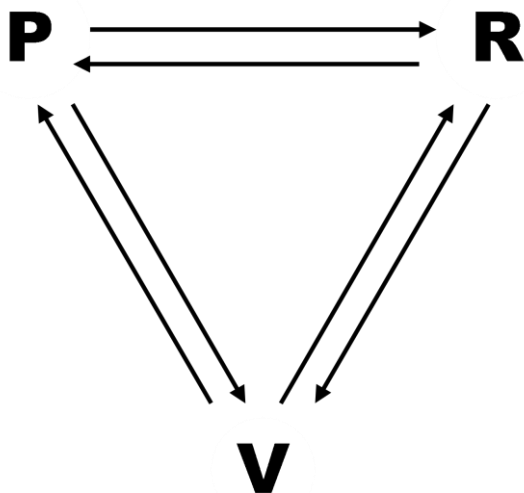


Figure 1: Drama Triangle (Karpman 1968 p. 40)

English (1976) suggested that Karpman's drama triangle incorporated two types of Victim. She linked this to her material on racketeering and said that a Type I opts for a payoff as Persecutor whilst a Type II racketeer stays in Victim role. To illustrate this, English drew two overlapping triangles so that there were two Victim Points with one Persecutor and one Rescuer. She pointed out that Type I Victims are easier to spot because they begin as Victims and later switch, whereas Type II Victims appear to be competent and do not become apparent Victims until they are 'kicked'. Hence practitioners need to be most concerned about those who spend the least amount of time as Victim.

As already mentioned, Clarkson (1987) proposed that the role of Bystander, or audience, needed to be added to the context of the drama triangle. She drew several semicircles below the triangle, which looked as if it could be the rows of seating for the audience at a theatre. In addition to the Bystander having a negative connotation such as passive collusion or turning the other way, Clarkson pointed out that such people could also be witnesses. Clarkson (1993) went on to suggest examples of what she called Bystander games, such as 'It's more complex than it seems', or 'I don't have all the information'. EATA President has refused the request for an independent investigation into the conference cancellation process "because of the complexity of the topic and the clarity of such an investigation instrument" (Rudolph, 2020, p.3). He suggests instead the option of involving professional conference organisers.

Choy (1990) suggested that we might use what she called the Winners Triangle to teach an antithesis to the Karpman Drama Triangle. For this, she converted Karpman's diagram into a simple triangle and changed the labels to be Assertive, Caring and Vulnerable. She suggested that Assertive people ask for what they want, say no, give feedback, negotiate and make changes to get their needs met; Caring people do not think for others or take over unless asked and they want to, do no more than their share and do not do things they do not want to do; Vulnerable people use Adult ego state for thinking and problem-solving and awareness of their feelings as data.

I suggested a similar idea which I referred to originally as the Autonomy Triangle (Hay 1995) and later renamed as the Potency Pyramid (2009), reversing the direction of the triangle so that the visual impact would be different. I also used words that matched the initial letters of Karpman's original labels, substituting Powerful, Responsible, and Vulnerable whilst pointing out that the combination of these three led to Potency. I have described these (Hay, 2009) as "Powerful – being appropriately powerful, taking action when we

should, including on behalf of genuine victims who cannot help themselves; Responsible – taking responsibility only for those things that are truly ours to deal with and not taking over other people’s responsibilities; Vulnerable – displaying our own vulnerability and asking for help when we need it – whilst accepting that others have the right to refuse our request.” (p. 153).

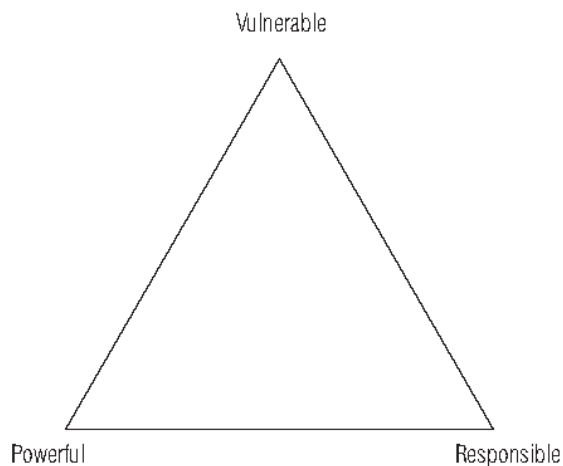


Figure 2: Potency Pyramid (Hay 2009 p. 150)

I believe I was openly Vulnerable when, on behalf of the Organising Committee, I asked for support when coronavirus emerged. The leaders of the five associations denied that they were Responsible in spite of the contract about profits and losses. They were Powerful enough to have decided to provide the support that was being requested. I learned later through the UK Companies House that UKATA and IARTA had enough money in the bank, and EATA Treasurer had been announcing at General Assemblies that EATA had too much money in the bank for a professional association based in

Switzerland. IDTA had already made it clear that they would go bankrupt because their funds were small but they were willing to provide as much financial assistance as possible.

In their material on symbiosis, Schiff and Contributors (1975) and collaborating authors referred to three types of redefining relationships which provide us with another way of understanding the way in which Berne describes game dynamics in terms of transactions :

- *Symbiotic*, for which they show a transactional diagram with an overt interaction between a Child contamination of Adult in one person and a Parent contamination of Adult in the other person, and an ulterior transaction between the respective Child and Parent ego states.
- *Parent-Competitive*, for which they show the overt transaction as between two Parent contaminations of Adult and the ulterior transaction as between the two Parent Ego states. In this, “Both people attempt to get the other to over-adapt to their definition of the situation, issue, or event.... The strokes may be positive or negative, and the people may occupy any one of the three positions on the Karpman Drama Triangle. However, they usually attempt to occupy the same game position at the same time.” (p. 63)
- *Child-Competitive*, which is similar to the Parent-Competitive but now the transactions are between Child contaminations of Adult and at the psychological level between the two Child ego states. “The favoured positions... appeared to be Victim and Persecutor, and both people usually attempt to occupy the same position simultaneously. The most intense competition tends to develop around the Victim position.” (p. 64).

Hexagon Role	Typical Game	Social Level	Psychological Level
Hard Worker	Look how hard I'm trying	Rescuer	Victim or Persecutor
Caretaker	I'm only trying to help you	Rescuer	Victim or Persecutor
Angry Righteous	Gotcha (called by them NIGYSOB)	Persecutor	Victim
Woeful Righteous	Look what they're doing to me; Ain't it awful	Victim	Persecutor
Angry Wrongdoer	Kick Me; Kick Me (If You Dare)	Victim	Persecutor
Woeful Wrongdoer	Poor Me; Kick Me (Please!); Don't Kick Me (Please?)	Persecutor but then into Victim	Victim

Table 1: Summary of Roles (based on Schiff & Contributors, 1975)

- However, they appear to make the same jump between levels as Berne did; their explanation of how game shifts are achieved through one of the four passive behaviours appears to jump from doing nothing, over-adaptation, agitation - which all may have little direct physical impact on other people, up to incapacitation or violence, which seems restricted to physical impact. Where would we fit outcomes such as organisational disciplinary processes, financial penalties, reputational damage – and even game outcomes that invite others to ostracise one of the players?

Schiff et al also suggested that there were six roles rather than three, showing these on what they called the Redefining Hexagon, using labels that need little explanation, and pointing out that the social level is generally different to the psychological level, which is the position that person is intending to occupy, defending against, or occupying at a hidden level. Table 1 summarises some of their examples.

During the dynamics that led to the cancellation of the conference by the five associations, there did not appear to be any Rescuer at the social level. We might see the negotiation of the postponement as Rescuing but that would require us to regard those who had booked to attend as Victims, which would imply that they knew when they booked that the conference might get cancelled and were accepting that it was a gamble.

Some years later, Summerton (1992, 1993a) introduced what he called the Game Pentagon, changing the names for Karpman's three roles and adding two more roles, as a tool for analysing games from the external point of view rather than from an internal and interpersonal perspective. His five roles are illustrated in Figure 3:

*Stage Manager* – the originator or source of an event, who unconsciously sets up the scenario or consciously masterminds it - such individuals may be forgotten because they do not appear on the scene of dramatic events. Perhaps this applies to the Chair of the World TA Conference Committee when he advised EATA President that I was playing a psychological game.

*Spectator* – the audience, the one who sits back and appears to be uninvolved but provides support by appearing interested in the event. Presumably this might apply to the members of the Boards/Councils of the TA associations involved, who made no attempt to ascertain the facts and simply supported their leaders.

*Sniper* – the openly decisive person, who may attack, defend, protect or prune, and offers critical comments and put-downs. There seemed to be several of these, including EATA Ethics Adviser and the Presidents of the two TA associations who wrote to me afterwards.

*Saviour* – the ombudsman who brings justice, saves others from harm, takes up social causes. Maybe this is part of the role of this author, who allowed the other directors to maintain a low profile when it became clear that the company set up to run the conference might have to stop trading.

*Scapegoat* – who bears blame for others or suffers consequences on behalf of the group. Clearly this author, in an extremely high-profile manner.

Summerton comments that Persecutor, Rescuer and Victims fit into Sniper, Saviour, and Scapegoat. The Connection (Steiner 1971) might be Stage Manager, and the Spectator may be the audience referred to by Karpman (1968).

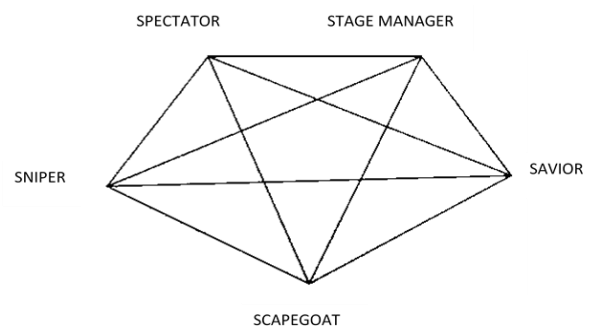


Figure 3: Game Pentagon Summerton 1992 p. 69

## So why do TA Professionals play TAMED

We can add to our understanding of these processes by considering some ideas on how conflict and bullying play out within organisations, and hence within associations.

Non-TA author Totton (2000) reviewed the interaction of politics and psychotherapy, quoting Cooper (1976) for defining politics as "to do with the deployment of power in or between social entities" (p.4). I have already mentioned the power dynamics built into TA associated with our structure of qualifications. I recall the horror expressed by some TA colleagues when I pointed out that TA operates as multi-level marketing – trainees purchase from PTSTAs and PTSTAs purchase from TSTAs. To this hierarchical aspect, we can add the vestigial prejudices that maintain the myth that 'clinical' (i.e. psychotherapy) has a higher status than the 'special fields' (i.e. educational and organisational applications of TA, with the status of counselling varying in different countries).

Totton also alerts us to how psychotherapists demonstrate an "above-average degree of argumentativeness. We have seen therapists adapting with greater or lesser success to the demands of totalitarian regimes; competing viciously with each other for power, prestige and income; and manipu-

ating institutions and training programs in order to maintain hegemonic control." (p.133).

He goes on to comment on how we use transference in our work, which means that the strong feelings in the client towards the practitioner leave a residue within the practitioner. This is likely to be carried into their contact with colleagues within professional organisations. Hence, negative interactions with colleagues may be the release of negative emotions stimulated by clients. Cornell (2020) describes how Berne (1947) had a similarly pessimistic view about leaders and followers generally, suggesting that leaders are likely to be power-hungry Egotists leading Ego-Searchers who want to lean on a stronger personality and Ego-centrics who want approval. According to Berne, the leader simplifies things for their followers.

Dalal (2016) described a similar process within the psychotherapy community itself. In an article based on a presentation he had made at an ITAA conference in 2015, he challenges the common view within psychotherapy that the source of all social dynamics, and particularly the difficulties, are attributed to internal psychological dynamics within individuals. He invites us to consider, for example, how hateful feelings come to be directed to particular groups, based on factors like skin colour, race or religion, if such hate is inherent within an individual. He also writes of tyrants punishing those who challenge them by making them outcasts, commenting that some of his colleagues did that to him when his first book did not match those colleagues' concepts.

He concludes that "The belief that the internal psychological world is the source of our experiential world has a tyrannical grip on our mindset in this profession ... the dominant discourses determine not only what we are able to see but also what we think about it that makes it a tyranny. Ruling paradigms bind us to the normative unconscious and blind us to the existence of alternative possibilities. ... the orthodoxy in our profession thinks it to be an error, an acting out, on the part of the therapist." (p.98).

Another non-TA author, Eddy (2019), provides insights as to why elected leaders are often narcissists and sociopaths. His comments include how:

- high-conflict politicians (HCPs) are elected because four groups of voters fight with each other, labelling the groups as Loving Loyalists who will do anything for the leader, Riled-Up Resisters who oppose the HCP, Mild Moderates who ignore the character defects of the HCP, and Disenchanted Dropouts who don't bother to vote.
- HCPs maintain their positions by inventing 'fantasy crisis trials' in which the 'voters' need the leader to defeat the 'villain' – in TA-speak, the

Victims need the leader to Rescue them by Persecuting the would-be evil Persecutor.

Eddy explains that HCPs cannot help how they are, which is the result of genetics, early childhood experiences, and the cultural environment. - in TA-speak, no surprises there.

However, HCPs create 'targets of blame', who will struggle to understand what is happening to them because the HCPs are seductive, and skilled at using 'splitting' so people see others as all good (i.e. the HCP) or all bad (i.e. the target, whoever they are).

Targets of blame need to be:

- familiar to the voters so they need no introduction;
- not part of voters' daily lives so they have little knowledge of what the actual behaviours are;
- widely viewed as powerful even though they are not compared to the HCP;
- already the target of resentment, which is especially effective if the resentment can be about the target's achievements so voters feel envious;
- seen as connected to secret power, for which the leader may invent conspiracy theories.

Although Eddy went on to write about Hitler and similar dictators, we can see how an individual can become a target of blame within any community. He wrote that "It's rarely about thoroughly examining the facts and honestly reporting that many of these alleged crimes are actually non-existent – or are problems that are already being or can be well-managed or solved." (p.119).

We can consider Eddy's material in terms of that written many years before by Jacobs (1991), based again on Berne's (1963) material about organisations. Jacobs writes of autocracy, applying this to any collection, from two people, through groups and organisations, to complete nations. He refers to Masters and Followers, with a permanent life position of I'm OK, You're not OK towards Dissenters. He suggests we consider the degree of autocracy based on who is suppressed: "those who disagree in an organised way, those who disagree individually, those who might disagree, or those whose agreement or disagreement makes no difference." (p.204). Thus Jacobs also points out that democracies have canons that limit the actions applied to dissenters whereas autocratic cultures will use the internal and external apparatus against them. With TA associations, these mean processes such as what gets published (newsletters, websites) as well as actions taken by role-holders.

Another factor was identified by non-TA author Chown (2020), who conducted an ethnographic field study into

how a new behavioural control mechanism was introduced into a teaching hospital in Canada. This too can be understood using a TA framework. Chown pointed out that designing such controls are particularly challenging when they are about work done "by professionals with high autonomy and considerable discretion." (p.64). What Chown found might also be understood if we consider Laugeri's (2006) model of emerging change that is based on Fox's (1975) chart that summarised Berne's (1963) material about organisations. Such changes are typically considered to be introduced in a top-down manner, whereas Chown, and Laugeri, indicate how much of it is generated in a bottom-up manner as those actually doing the work adapt the new controls to the circumstances. Chown refers to "two pathways in the co-creation of controls, which I call *customization* and *transmutation*. In the first pathway, they customized the design of the mandated control mechanism so that it functioned well in the context and achieved its intended control outcomes. In the second pathway, they developed their own locally designed alternative control mechanisms to achieve the intended control outcomes and then abandoned the mandated control mechanism." (p.74) (*italics in original*). We might speculate how much it is possible to introduce top-down control designs within a TA association.

Yet another perspective was provided by Timmermans (2020), whose article was published in the *Transactional Analysis Journal* towards the end of the year in which the associations cancelled the conference. She proposed that workplace bullying should be regarded as due to an organisational script. Quoting research studies that indicate that up to a third of people surveyed (in UK and USA) had experienced such bullying, she goes on to quote:

- Krausz (1993) for linking life positions to exploitative, manipulative or dependent relationships, mentioning factors including competition and limitations on personal contributions;
- Summerton (1993b) for linking group games to the etiquette and technicalities of the culture;
- Clarkson (1987, 1993) for regarding Bystanders as an essential audience to keep the game going;
- Mohr (2012) for noting that the patterns remain within the organisation even though the individuals may be interchangeable.

Another useful explanation of why TAMED occurs is provided by Sills (2003). Building on the concept of role lock (Bogdanoff and Elbaum 1978), she writes of how the group leader may be unconsciously 'not allowing' issues to be owned by the group. She

provides an example of a group member repeatedly raising issues and the "group itself firmly refused to understand or acknowledge that there might be any truth in [the individual's] ideas. Almost aggressively, they denied absolutely his perceptions – not only [specific members] but also all the other members who had allowed themselves to be led and guided." (p.285). Sills also described an example where the leader felt vulnerable to criticism. In that case, the group saw itself as 'a nice group', with a pattern of one member emerging as 'the difficult one' who would have arguments and then leave the group. That member would be told by the group that he was failing to behave in a suitably TA-based OK-OK manner and therefore owned the problem.

She concludes that role lock means that the 'difficult' one is raising their own script issues in a group that is denying their own issues. However, at the risk of engaging in SPOT, I suggest that it may well be that someone with many years of experience within the organisational field of TA may be identifying genuine problems that need to be addressed. I began this article with an example from my childhood about being blamed for something that existed within the 'group' that was my parents. I have known since I first learned TA in 1975 that they created me so they could place the blame elsewhere. Perhaps Sills needed to differentiate between deterministic and developmental scripts (Hay, 2012), or what English (1988) referred to as improvisation theatre.

To quote Sills' final comment, the 'role-locked' individual "brings the gift of potential awareness and growth to the whole group." (p.287). It is my hope that this article will reinforce Sills' message and challenge the TA myth of explanatory depth – sometimes a cigar is just a cigar and sometimes a dynamic is not a psychological game, as I will explore next.

## Is TAMED a Game?

I mentioned above under Contextual Considerations that I have been noticing several articles in the TA literature that seem relevant to this theme. Several of them appeared in *The Transactional Analyst*, which is published by the UK Association for TA (UKATA).

Napper (2021) directly challenges looking at the systemic nature of bullying in society through a Persecutor-Victim model. Napper refers to Jean Illsley Clark explaining at a conference in 1996 that considering bullying as something on the drama triangle was to misunderstand Berne and the unconscious nature of games. Clark pointed out that bullies know they are bullying, even though the origins of the behaviour may be unconscious. Napper emphasises that viewing such issues through an individual lens means we may overlook the systemic causes; instead we need to consider "the existential



and psychological levels of societies, both conscious and unconscious." (p.15).

Napper also refers to her decision to leave UKATA (one of the associations involved in cancelling the conference) after 25 years of membership because of the conscious, persistent references to psychotherapists instead of practitioners, which she regards as bullying, or 'othering', of the other fields of application.

In the same journal issue, Siddique (2021) points out how the traditional apprentice training model within TA is "in danger of (re) creating a hierarchical space for manipulation of trust ... [and that] ... It is important to hold onto their own narrative and call out bullying and discrimination...". (p.46).

Simpson writes that bullying seems to her "to encompass the whole range of forms of the misuse of perceived and actual power and authority. (p.4). Although the article is about how we can use TA resources to support those being bullied generally, she points out how "our own groups and TA organisations are not free from these dynamics. It is important that all transactional analysts nurture the willingness to open space for discussion and challenge, to be able to hold the discomfort of conflict rather than to turn a blind eye for an 'easy life'. I believe such healthy aggression and openness needs to be a more acceptable part of our culture." (p.5).

Finally, in the same issue we can consider some of the content of William's (2021) Keynote at the TA Cumbrian Conference, when he queried the impact on connection of our cultural stories. He refers to Booker (no reference given but presumably 2004) for story archetypes that include overcoming the monster, seeing this as a potential rationale for Berne's ideas of the pathology of clients being the big bad monster, so that our "job is to demonstrate dominion and oppression within a competitive frame." (p.43). Williams extends this idea to reflect on 'hostile architecture' (Rosenberger 2017), "which results in the alienation of the vulnerable individual" (p.43). He suggests we consider how TA may act as the oppressor, the negative editor, editing out those more vulnerable and less powerful." (p.43).

## The Organisational Perspective

*This concluding section is included at the suggestion of one of the reviewers of my article. I thank them for prompting me to begin the process of creating a new model for illustrating professional associations. The following are my initial thoughts – and I welcome feedback in order to develop the model further.*

I conclude with some ideas about how we might consider TAMED as a manifestation of systemic dynamics that arise because of the nature of a

professional association. I am prompted to do this also because of another theme that is emerging within the TA community – how EATA and ITAA can work more closely together. The current ITAA President (Leigh 2019) announced a personal longing for ITAA and EATA to reconnect, and how she felt some responsibility because she was on the ITAA Board when the affiliation formed in 1989 between those two associations was ended in 1995. More recently, both ITAA and EATA Presidents (Leigh and Rudolph 2021) have described the ending as "an important systemic intervention that facilitated the richer autonomous functioning of each association." (p.1). They go on to add that they intend to discuss this with past presidents. As the EATA President who concluded the negotiations to set up the Affiliation Agreement (which included Canada and India) and who then became the ITAA President in the following year and made every effort to implement the Agreement, I will be able to tell them how disappointed I was when the Agreement was abandoned a few years later.

I suggest also that we need to update the way in which we think about organisations that are professional associations. I have already extended Berne's organisational diagrams to develop the organisational cone (Hay 2016), as shown in Figure 4. In this I have taken Berne's (1963) two-dimensional circles and presented them in the shape of a three-dimensional cone.

This allows us to see that the leadership is in touch with the external world of the organisation and is not contained within the circle of the membership. It also reflects the hierarchical nature of any but the smallest organisations, with functional divisions that begin at the customer/client facing end of the organisation and continue up through the levels of management. Different groups within the organisation can then be shown to have different contacts outside the organisation. There are the employees who are in contact directly with customers, middle level managers and executives who are in contact with other organisations such as suppliers, and top-level management who deal with government officials, financiers and shareholders.

However, in a professional association maybe we may need something closer to Berne's original two-dimensional diagram. As shown in Figure 5, the leaders are usually elected by the members so can be represented within a circle that exists within the wider circle of the membership. Funding comes from the members so there is no need for top managers to be in contact with financiers or shareholders. In their roles as officers of the professional association, they have no contact with clients. Figure 5 therefore illustrates a typical association that might be affiliated to EATA.

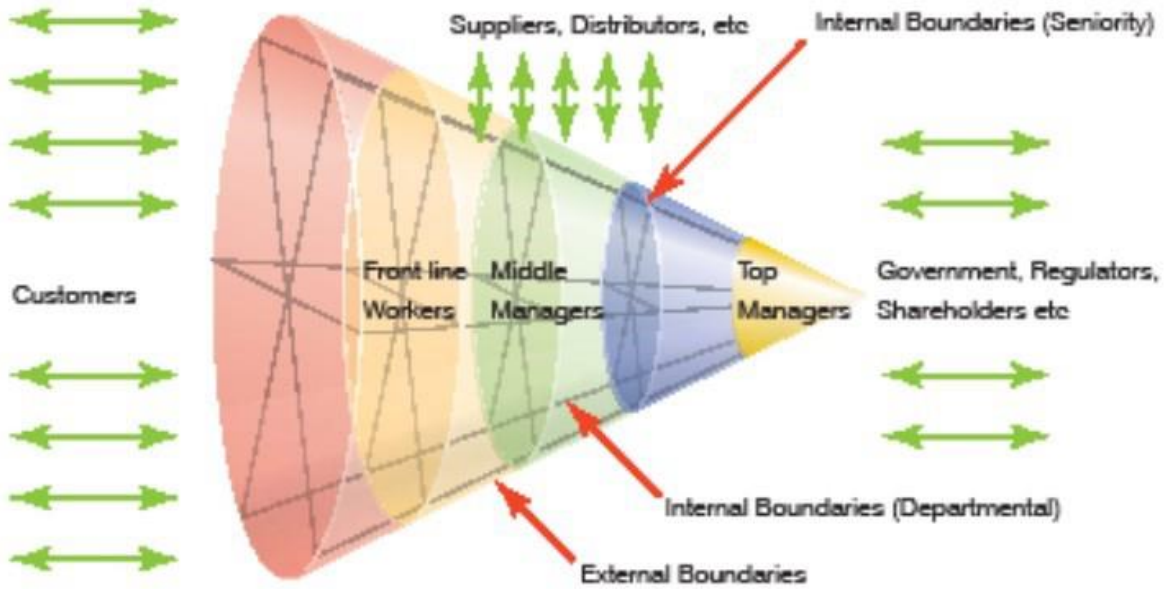


Figure 4: Organisational Cone (Hay, 2016, p.20)

Members elect their own executive committee, or board, or council, depending on which term they use.

I have then included a diagram to represent EATA Council. This follows the same pattern except that the 'members' of the Council are the delegates and they appoint the leaders. Each delegate is therefore representing a national association, or in some cases more than one when these exist within the same geographical boundary. I have included within the diagram several of the diagrams to represent the affiliated associations (not all of them – just enough to illustrate the point). This is because the delegates are there on behalf of their associations – they are not there in their own right as individuals. It is important to note that they are called delegates and not representatives; this is because they commit the associations who send them to any decisions that are made within the Council. They must therefore ensure that whatever they vote for reflects the views of the members within the associations who appointed them.

Figure 5 is an initial attempt to illustrate the structure and boundaries of EATA Council. It is important to note that there is no hierarchy in the way that exists in typical organisations. Unlike employees who may expect to follow the instructions of their managers, the members of professional associations choose their own leaders and expect them to fulfil the wishes of the members. For such an association, it is as if the hierarchy has to be drawn upside down. The association belongs to the members, who are

therefore bystanders if they take no action when their leaders play psychological games.

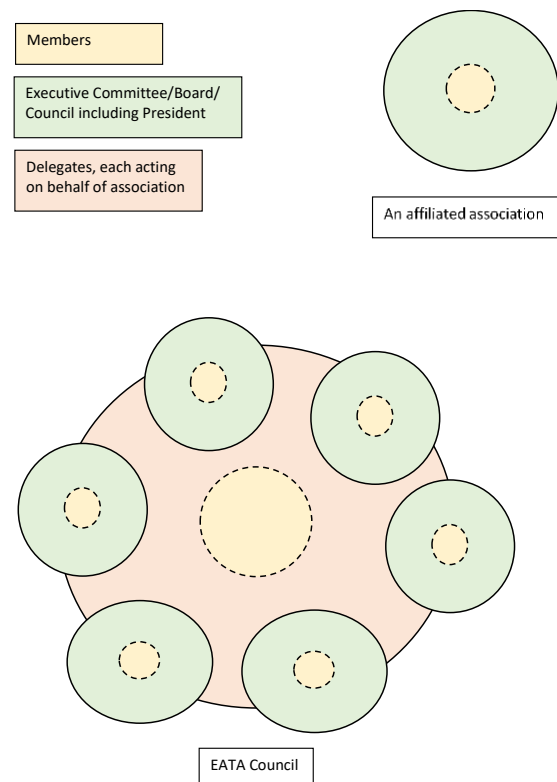


Figure 5: An Illustration of EATA Council

It has been many years since I was EATA President. The EATA Council used to meet three times every year and the role of the Executive Committee was only to deal with anything urgent that occurred between meetings. We did not have the option of emails or meeting on Zoom in those days.

A proposal was approved at the EATA Council meeting in 2020 that the Presidents of the Affiliated Associations could begin to have their own meetings. This is an intriguing initiative and it will be interesting to see how such a body will run alongside the EATA Council, when EATA Council consists of all of the associations that have appointed those presidents.

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**Note added by the author and the editor, who are of course the same person:**

*One of the reviewers raised a question about the ethics of writing about the individuals who hold, or have held, the roles referred to in this article and suggested that they be sent an advance copy.*

*As the author, I have now seen many publications that carry inaccurate and misleading information about what I have done in my roles as Editor and as the Chair of the World TA Conference 2020 Organising Committee (which was the only reason I was a Director of the company set up to protect the UK TA associations). I was not sent any of these in advance - I first saw the various publications when they became public.*

*As the editor, I appreciate that the reviewer paid attention to this aspect and realise that others may have the same thought. I have therefore agreed, in my role as the editor, with myself in the role as the author, that I will send out advance copies, labelled as not for publication, to those whose names have appeared in the various publications referred to within the article.*

*In both of my roles - author and editor - I hope that readers recognise that I am referring in this article to behaviours within ROLES within our TA community and not to how anyone acts as one of my professional colleagues with clients.*