

### Transactional Analysis – a System of Psychology

Transactional Analysis is a psychological system that integrates theories of child development, communication and interpersonal and intrapsychic process. These theories were developed by Dr Eric Berne, a Canadian psychiatrist working in California.

Whilst working in the US Army in World War II, he observed that certain character traits were predictable from behavioural clues. He continued these observations when working in a psychiatric hospital. From these observations he developed his ideas and the concept of ego states into the well known model of Parent, Adult & Child as observable ego states which we can move between. He gave the theory depth by looking at how the Child and Parent ego states are in part dictated by childhood experience and decisions in response to parents and other adults' treatment of the child. *(Note the TA convention: Parent, Adult & Child or P A C with capital letters denotes the ego states, with small letters the actual parent or child.)*

Berne further extended the theory by the realisation that observing the ego state that is employed and responded to, provides a model showing what communication may be effective and what may fail. This provides powerful tools in analysing communication and for observing the success or lack of clarity, understanding and acknowledgement.

The best known theory from TA is that of psychological games which Berne expounded in his 1964 book "Games People Play"; a world wide best seller still in print today. The concept of psychological games played outside of our awareness give

explanation to much of human interaction. That is, our capacity to repeat familiar unsuccessful communication that leaves us with a feeling of "why has that happened (or gone wrong) again?"

Although it has its roots in psychoanalytic theory, originally TA was a psychotherapy used in what today would be defined as a Cognitive Behavioural modality. This developed as different approaches emerged. Gradually the emphasis has shifted to a modality that examines the cognitive process and works with the unconscious.

TA is applied in psychotherapy, counselling, education and in organisations. As a relational psychotherapy it can be effective in working with all levels of disturbance and as a cognitive brief therapy it is effective in short term counselling. A point of confusion can be that what European terminology defines as counselling, we would classify as coaching and classify it as an organisational application. Putting aside a difference in nomenclature, TA is very effective in coaching, mentoring and in all business situations where clear communication is essential and an understanding of people's process is valuable. In education similar benefits arise and TA is used creatively by many in this field.

We invite you to explore the breadth and application of modern Transactional Analysis. Listed below are sources for TA organisations and training and web sites where more information will be found. Some basic reading is also suggested and CPTI publish a more detailed reading list at [www.cpti.info](http://www.cpti.info)

In Scotland CPTI provides a comprehensive training programme in TA counselling and psychotherapy including a validated counselling diploma and MSc degrees in both counselling and psychotherapy.

CPTI run introductory courses (the TA101). Details of this course and booking forms, the training prospectus and application forms can be found on the CPTI web site ([www.cpti.info](http://www.cpti.info)) along with FAQs and other information. Alternatively, our literature can be requested from the Edinburgh office.

## Further Information

Information on training in other locations may be found at the following web sites:

UK Institute of Transactional Analysis [www.ita.org.uk](http://www.ita.org.uk)

Europe European Association of Transactional Analysis [www.eatanews.org](http://www.eatanews.org)

Outside Europe International Transactional Analysis Association [www.ita-net.org](http://www.ita-net.org)

Additional web sites are listed on the CPTI site and others

### Reading

Basic text book: TA Today Stewart and Joinnes, Lifespace Publishing ISBN: 1-870244-00-1

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*See other CPTI Training Information Sheets for detailed descriptions of the training programmes, TA and the available qualifications. Training Information Sheets are downloadable from [www.cpti.info](http://www.cpti.info) in PDF format or can be requested as emails from our office.*

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