

## IN THIS ISSUE

Restructuring Approved  
1

Responding to  
Members in Crisis  
3

Report From TA  
Association of Japan  
5

MLL Event in India  
7

International  
Trainers' Day  
9

Reflections on the MLL  
10

April TAJ Reflects New  
Developments  
12

About TAJ Free Access  
Articles  
13

What Is  
Ethical Thinking?  
14

# ITAA Plan to Transition to a Professional Association Approved

by Thorsten Geck, Chitra Ravi, and Elana Leigh

**W**e are pleased to announce that the ITAA membership has voted to approve the plan to transition the ITAA into a professional association. The balloting, which ended on 15 March, resulted in 433 valid votes, with 413 (95.38%) saying yes to the plan, 5 (1.25%) saying no, and 15 (3.46%) abstaining. We appreciate and thank you, our members, for your responses.

The language of the ballot read as follows:

I approve and give the board of trustees (BoT) the mandate to proceed with the reorganization plan, specifically: 1. I approve amending the Restated Articles of Incorporation to change the name of the existing nonprofit to "ITAA Foundation." ITAA as it is now will continue to hold a IRC 501(c)(3) license. 2. The BoT will establish a professional association, holding a IRC 501(c)(6) license, [which will further] be named International Transactional Analysis Association (ITAA). The Board of Directors of the International Transactional Analysis Association (ITAA) will appoint the Trustees of the ITAA Foundation. 3. I approve that my membership will be transferred to the ITAA (the new professional association, 501(c)(6) license) and will become a voting member.

***"We are pleased to announce that the ITAA membership has voted to approve the plan to transition the ITAA into a professional association. The balloting, which ended on 15 March, resulted in 433 valid votes, with 413 (95.38%) saying yes to the plan, 5 (1.25%) saying no, and 15 (3.46%) abstaining."***

During the last couple of months, there were two online meetings during which members could ask questions and discuss this proposal so we could hear your questions and

concerns. More than 80 members attended the meetings or contacted us by email. We thank you all for your interest! It was valuable to present this complex project in dialogue and to be inspired by your questions.

Here is a brief summary of some of the themes that came up.

We, the core team of the planned restructuring, have realized how important it is to emphasize that we are not deciding about you, but deciding with you. The fact that the vote was positive means that you have given us a mandate to establish a professional association for you and with you.

With the support of the ITAA lawyers, we will develop bylaws that meet the requirements of California law. However, the constitution and mission associated with the professional association needs to meet the needs of the members, and you will have an active say in this and will vote on the new bylaws.

We will take your questions into consideration while we work with shaping the (c)(6) professional association. Among those questions were the following:

- How will the ITAA Foundation—which is what the current ITAA (c)(3) association will be called—be managed? For example, will the management board be such that single interests do not dominate?
- How will the management board of the professional association be structured? How will power be distributed? How will decisions be made and by whom so that members' interests are adequately visible and represented?
- How will the IBOC be integrated into the professional association and how independent will it be?
- Will the professional association speak out on socially significant events and if so, how? Will we take a political stand as other professional associations sometimes have? And if so, will this adequately take into account members' interests?


We view these questions as an expression of the important need for us to meet as equals, with an OK-OK attitude and in constant dialogue. Your contributions to the discussion have made this clear once again!

There were also practical questions about finances: What disadvantages will the ITAA (c)(6) have? (Answer: We will pay taxes.) Will the status of certification remain? (Answer: Yes.) Will there be audits for continuous qualification? (Answer: This is an interesting question that we will discuss with you. The ITAA (c)(3) aims to promote TA as a valuable theory and an effective approach to action. In addition to that, a pro-

fessional association can also focus on the interests of its professional members.)

We found the meetings with members to be enriching and valuable. Now that your votes have confirmed that you want to move ahead with this project, we will pursue it on your behalf. The process will include more online meetings on a regular basis so that we can hear your ongoing questions and concerns. The digital possibilities offer so many opportunities to be in contact between Annual General Membership (AGM) meetings, and we look forward to taking advantage of those.

As things develop from here, you will be hearing much more from us. This is an exciting time!

If you have additional questions, please contact us at [restructure-itaa@use.startmail.com](mailto:restructure-itaa@use.startmail.com) . 

## the SCRIPT

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## 2022 TAJ Bound Volume Is Available

The 2022 bound volume of the *Transactional Analysis Journal* was mailed in late December. Those members who are entitled to copies based on their membership category should have received them by 1 April. If you have not yet received yours, please check with Jenneva Guzman at [info@itaaworld.org](mailto:info@itaaworld.org) to make sure you were on the list to receive a copy. Include your mailing address and phone number, and if you are due a copy, the office will request a replacement for the 2022 bound TAJ on your behalf.

# Members in Crisis

by Marguerite Sacco in Collaboration With the “Members in Crisis” Task Team and on Behalf of the ITAA Board of Trustees

**T**he ITAA Board of Trustees (BOT) is in a process of reflecting on our approach to our members and to humanity at large whenever we are faced with the traumas of war, human rights violations, and environmental and global health catastrophes. This reflection came about as a result of complaints received by ITAA members about statements made in support of or in condolence for those suffering in these circumstances. For instance, the BOT received significant criticisms for comments made in support of Ukrainian as well as Russian members in the Russia/Ukraine conflict, and again when a statement was issued in *The Script* regarding Black Lives Matter at the time of the George Floyd murder in the United States. And in our efforts to reach out to those affected by environmental disaster, we have garnered criticism for a myopic focus that is influenced by mainstream Western media. In an effort to address these, a task team was formed to look at our approach in two broad categories of crisis: one being environmental and health and the other being social/political.

In our deliberations we posed the question, not only “how does the ITAA respond in these situations,” but more broadly speaking, “how does transactional analysis respond to these events?” What does it mean in terms of OKness; of action, inaction and bystanding; and in terms of discounting, passive behaviors, rackets, racketeering, and games?

In the category of environmental crises, there is no doubt that the ITAA as a whole wishes to reach out and offer our support to our members in difficulty. Our world is, as we are well aware, in a state of ineffable crisis. We have come through and still suffer the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in this year alone, we have seen numerous events that have hugely impacted people’s lives. It has become almost impossible to keep up with the catastrophes as they hit our countries and affect our members. In discussion about this, we came to the conclusion that we need the ITAA membership to become involved here and not depend on the board of trustees to get it right all of the time. If a member is aware of something that the

board has missed, let us know so that all members have the opportunity to discover what is happening beyond our own borders and beyond our own particular media channels.

Now to matters of politics: In the world today, there are at least 27 ongoing conflicts worldwide, not to mention prejudice-motivated crimes reported daily. The BOT has at times felt the need to make a statement in support of our members or against such wrongdoing on the basis of our transactional analysis values and principles. We do recognize that us making comments can stir up responses from our members who have different perspectives and/or knowledge. We wondered whether we should take the “safe” option and not make any comment at all. This did not sit well with us, however. As transactional analysts, we are well aware of discounting, passive behaviors (Schiff & Schiff, 1971), the role of the bystander (Clarkson, 1987), and also our basic philosophy that people can think and people are OK. If we hold to those tenets, we can step up and speak up even at the risk of contradiction and conflict.

However, as we do this, we are aware of the potential for political and social polarization that may thwart our well-intentioned actions. If we are to take “the risk of becoming involved in outside affairs and of being criticised” (Berne, 1947/2020, Appendix B, p. 292), how do we do this as effectively and inclusively as possible? How might we “remind ourselves of (Berne’s) views about our duty as citizens (to interest ourselves in world events) precisely so that we are not overwhelmed by them to the point of passivity, quietism, and inactivity” (Tudor, 2020, p. 17)? How do we recognize and accept conflict as a normal part of life while understanding the pain and hurt of the disagreeing parties? How capable are we, as transactional analysts one and all, of entering into the fray with “game-free candidness” (Berne, 1964), taking responsibility for our own feelings and recognizing the “OKness” of another point of view no matter how opposed to it we might be?


In his 2020 article “Transactional Analysis and Politics: A Critical Review,” Keith Tudor researched the interplay between TA and politics within the TA literature and found that while there have been attempts to confront the issue, for the most part we have tended to shy away from political matters. As transactional analysts, we have a versatile theoretical framework by which to understand conflict and polarization, and we also have, well within reach, that “curative force of

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nature” (Berne, 1968, p. 88) known as physis, together with our capacity to autonomously communicate and reach out toward each other in “spontaneous, game-free candidness” (Berne, 1964, p. 160). With this, we can bring our thoughts, emotions and psychological perspectives into focus as we debate how we may, in a considered and constructive way, actively speak out on matters social and political.

To this end, we will be sending a survey to you, the members, by which you will have an opportunity to offer your opinion on how we might respond to political matters. Keep an eye out for the survey, and please do give us your input. We would like to progress this even further by hosting a webinar on the subject of political discourse and polarization. We also would like to see a *Transactional Analysis Journal* theme issue dedicated to this complex topic in which various views can be expressed in an academic, collegial way in order to expand on the subject and give it its due justice and attention.

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## Events and Reminders Calendar

- 4 April 2023** . . . . . Social Engagement Committee Webinar
- 19 June 2023** . . . . . ITAA-EATA Webinar With Matthew Elton
- 4 July 2023** . . . . . International Trainers’ Meeting, Dublin, Ireland
- 7-8 July 2023** . . . . . Annual In-Person ITAA Board of Trustees Meeting
- 29 July 2023** . . . . . ITAA Annual General Membership (AGM) Meeting (online)
- 1 August 2023** . . . . . Deadline TAJ theme issue on “Leadership”
- 1 February 2024** . . . . . Deadline TAJ theme issue on “Intimacy and Creativity: Revisiting Berne’s Secret Garden”
- 1 August 2024** . . . . . Deadline TAJ theme issue on “Relationships in Love, Play, and Work”

For more details about these and other events, visit the ITAA website at [www.itaaworld.org](http://www.itaaworld.org).

# Maintaining Connection: Translation, Transcency, and Transactions

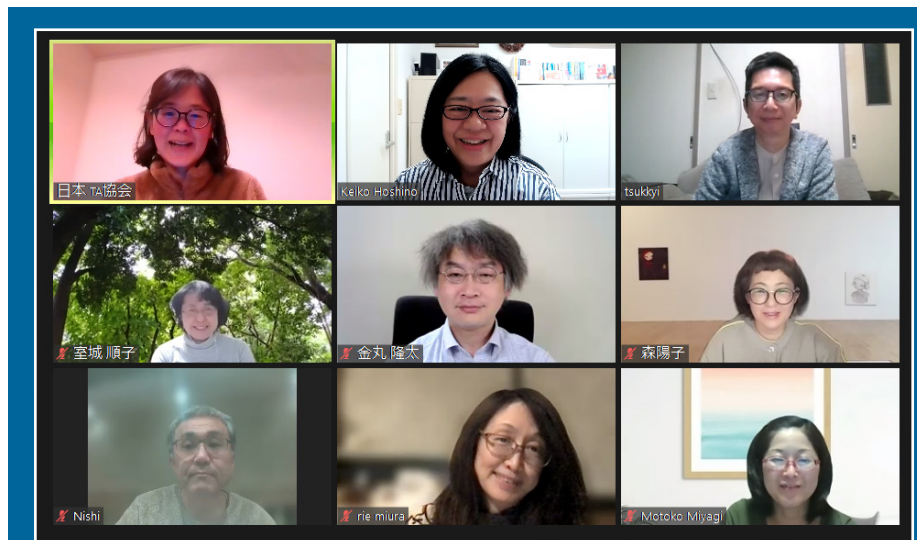
by Izumi Kadomoto

The Transactional Analysis Association of Japan (TAAJ), a nonprofit organization, has been aware of and supportive of transactional analysis in Japan since its founding. Although we have only about 150 members, we are proud that we have about 20 IBOC Certified Transactional Analysts and have been a partner organization of ITAA for many years.

The history of TAAJ began in 1987 with Kozo Rokkaku, Michiko Fukazawa, Yoshitaka Moronaga, and Chie Shigeta, who were in the first generation of TAAJ. They were all trained mainly in the United States and imported to Japan many theories and techniques as well as the philosophy of TA so that those could be integrated into the Japanese psychotherapy, education, organizational, and counseling fields.

I became TAAJ President last year, and I regard myself as in the third generation in Japanese TA. Over the past 36 years, TAAJ has experienced

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Online meeting of the TAAJ Board of Trustees on 13 March 2023: (top from left) Izumi Kadomoto, Keiko Hoshino, Tetsuo Tsukioka; (middle from left) Junko Muroki, Ryuta Kanemaru, Yoko Mori; (bottom from left) Toshiki Nishizawa, Rie Miura, Motoko Miyagi. (Board members not shown: Yayoi Ubukata, Yuko Shimada, Akiko Okano)

many challenges in becoming a bridge between the Japanese way of life and transactional analysis in the world. Most of our activities encouraged people in Japan to study and learn more.

On the other hand, we still have many of the same problems we did

all those years ago. First, the Japanese TA community is not unified; there are three Japanese TA organizations (see page 6), each with different aims and orientation. The TAAJ was established to foster the wholesome diffusion of transactional analysis for the welfare and development of human beings, whereas

other Japanese TA organizations are more aimed at educational practice, for example, through team building, personnel issues, and management based on transactional analysis or use of transactional analysis in medical contexts. Although the three associations notably cooperated for the international conference in Osaka in 2013, regrettably they did not discuss seriously how they could work together after that. As TAAJ President, I am now very interested in connecting and cooperating with the other two organizations. The ITAA and EATA will be our good model in this task.

Second, Japanese people experience a language barrier so high and thick that most of them tend to give up trying to read TA materials in English. This is partly because our language (grammatical) structure is extremely different from that of other regions. Although AI technology is good and we can use some AI translations, it will be some years before automatic translation is accurate enough to be useful. Our difficulty with English is also partly a result of our cultural historical life script, especially after World War II. These factors leave us with a narrow path for connecting with international TA.

As a way to break out of this situation, in 2018 TAAJ started a series of webinars in which participants read articles from the *Transactional Analysis Journal (TAJ)* with trainers. For each session, a trainer (a CTA, PTSTA, or TSTA) chooses a *TAJ* article to introduce to participants so they understand its content before the group discussion. Having a flavor of the article serves as a teaser to the original article, even though trainers do not offer an entire translated manuscript. Participants are invited to

imagine what the author thinks and to feel their own inner excitement.

TAAJ has also just begun another new challenge. As a partner of the ITAA, we receive a link to each issue of *The Script* so we can share it with our members. Beginning this year, TAAJ will also provide a translation of the contents (titles and authors only) of each issue in Japanese. We hope this will help our members feel more connected to the international TA community. Such accessibility can become a good stimulant or a transcendent cable to know the broader world instead of being distant from vigorously growing TA.

I hope the TAAJ stretches and expands its network more to the world online and offline. 🍷

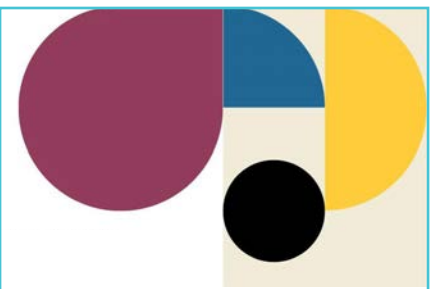
### The Three Japanese TA Associations

*(Descriptions taken from the respective websites)*

**Transactional Analysis Association of Japan (TAAJ).** A partner association of ITAA. Our organization provides a place where members can learn together in order to understand TA correctly and to be able to “use” TA practically on their own.

**Japanese Society of Transactional Analysis (JSTA).** This is an academic organization dedicated to the education, research, and dissemination of TA.

**Japan Transactional Analysis Association (JTAA).** This organization is a psychological education and practice group for more prosperous life based on the philosophy of TA that “I am OK, you are OK” and “everyone has the ability to think.”



## Webinar on Hope & Despair: 4 April 2023

As TA practitioners in all fields and contexts, we share the burden of many global problems that directly and indirectly impact our work with clients/client systems. Climate change, inequality, the war in Ukraine/Russia, and systemic racism are some major themes that set the current tone internationally. These world events call for our empathy, courage, and resilience, which is not always an easy path to navigate. How in these times can we straddle the tension between hope and despair while staying realistic, connected, and inclusive?

This webinar organized by the ITAA Social Engagement Committee is an invitation to cocreate a space in which we can explore our individual, cultural, and group experiences in relation to hope and despair. As a global community of transactional analysts, we acknowledge that resilience arises more easily in groups that think and feel together and that new possibilities can emerge by connecting experiences.

Please join us by registering [here](#). Once you have registered, we will email a few days before the event with the Zoom link, so be sure to add [info@itaaworld.org](mailto:info@itaaworld.org) to your contacts list. (A recording of the event will be posted afterward.)

# 2023 Multi-Level Learning Event in India

by Jennifer Moses

The South Asian Association of Transactional Analysts (SAATA) kicked off the new year with its annual Multi-Level Learning event (MLL). This one-of-a-kind experience goes beyond traditional trainer-led learning by bringing together passionate learners who share a professional commitment to the principles of transactional analysis (TA). The event is designed to empower and engage participants in active sharing and learning.

After being held online for the past 2 years, the MLL returned to its in-person format for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. The event took place 7-8 January 2023 in the vibrant city of Bangalore, India.

The enthusiasm was palpable as around 100 TA professionals gathered to reflect on the theme of “Professional Identity,” which provided an opportunity to reflect on how they relate to themselves and others in their professional contexts. Our professional identity is shaped by how we see ourselves, how our clients see us, and how we fit within the community of transactional analysts. These experiences intersect and influence our understanding of ourselves as professionals. This MLL encouraged participants to share their experiences and reflect on others’ sharing through the lens of four subthemes:

- **Identity and individual:** an inquiry into the meaning of identity in terms of who we are as individuals and as transactional analysts
- **Identity and belonging:** an exploration of the binding element of identity in the community of TA practitioners belonging to SAATA and focusing on the interplay of the need to be an individual and yet belong in the community
- **Identities within the TA community:** a reflection of how “we are the same but not the same” within the TA community, acknowledging that as a community we

are diverse yet are bound by a binding factor (TA)

- **Identity in the outside world:** a discussion of the ways the outside world experiences the TA community and the way we are demographically placed in the world

The event began with a plenary during which the theme and sub-themes were introduced by Sailaja Manacha, the outgoing Vice President of the Professional Standards Division of SAATA. A panel discussion on “Professional Identity” followed moderated by Deepak Dhananjaya, the incoming Vice President of the Professional Standards Division.



Panel discussion on “Professional Identity” moderated by Deepak Dhananjaya (right) with (from left) Ameet Matoo, Shilok Mukkati, and Dr. Sowmya Krishna



Exam celebration at the Multi-Level Training

from recognizing the pain experienced by those who do not feel included.

The day ended with a closing plenary session during which participants had the opportunity to reflect on their learnings and insights from their respective group discussions. They shared their thoughts and experiences and discussed how the

themes and subtopics resonated with them personally and professionally.

The second day of the MLL began with a special celebration for the 20 newly certified SAATA Diploma awardees. Participants shared their personal stories about how the journey of writing the Diploma exam had been a powerful process of self-discovery and personal growth. It was a heartwarming moment as

***“The enthusiasm was palpable as around 100 TA professionals gathered to reflect on the theme of ‘Professional Identity,’ which provided an opportunity to reflect on how they relate to themselves and others in their professional contexts.”***

everyone came together to recognize the dedication of these individuals and how they had challenged and explored their personal identities in their unique ways. An impromptu process session reinforced the sense of community and connection among the participants. The session was an important aspect of the event because it helped to create a deeper

sion. The panelists included: Ameet Matoo, a certified OD consultant and a human process facilitator from ISABS (Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Sciences) and an R&D engineer who followed his calling and moved to the field of organizational development; Shilok Mukkati, a poet, dancer, theater artist, radio jockey, public speaker, and national award winner for her radio show “Lesbians in the Shadow,” who has embraced her art to convey powerful messages about the queer community through language that weaves around her personal experiences and emotions; and Dr. Sowmya Krishna, MBBS, MRCPsych, CCT (UK), a consultant psychiatrist with more than 15 years of experience in managing common and complex mental disorders and who has codeveloped a computerized clinical assessment tool called GMHAT (Global Mental Health Assessment Tool) to improve access to mental health services.

Some reflections that emerged from the panelists’ experiences were the evolving nature of professional identities over time; the influence of factors such as ethnic background, gender, culture, and sexuality on shap-

ing professional identity; and being aware of the significance of the influence of one’s personal identity over one’s professional identity. It was inspiring to see the panelists openly share their struggles in balancing personal and professional identities. (The recording of the panel discussion is available at <https://www.saata.org/saata-gallery/>)

The panel discussion provided a foundation for attendees to continue discussions on the subthemes in smaller groups. These discussions were led by a facilitator, with the facilitation process supervised by a PTSTA and the supervision process supervised by a TSTA.

The first small group discussion focused on the subtheme “Identity and Individual.” In my group, we discussed how despite having multiple individual and professional identities, we seek ways to belong. After a lunch break that provided an opportunity to network, the small groups delved into the subtheme of “Identity and Belonging.” The facilitator challenged our group to explore what it meant to not belong. It became clear that the ease of feeling a sense of belonging can prevent individuals



**“As the small group discussions came to a close, it was apparent that a strong bond had formed among us in a short period, which we attributed to our shared professional identity.”**

sense of camaraderie and understanding within the groups.

Continuing with the small group discussion, the focus was on the subtheme “Identities Within the TA Community.” The discussions revealed that a geographical identity can sometimes have a subtle but significant impact on one’s sense of identity and belonging. This reflection and the emotions it stirred helped group members reflect on the diverse ways they contribute to the richness of identities within the TA community.

The final small group discussion focused on the subtheme “Identity in the Outside World.” It was an activity-based exploration of how each of us relates to the outside world. The discussion revealed the unique ways we interact with others in small and large groups as well as with nature and the universe. As the small group discussions came to a close, it was apparent that a strong bond had formed among us in a short period, which we attributed to our shared professional identity.


The closing plenary session left the participants feeling grateful for the chance to connect with fellow professionals in person and for the opportunity to reflect on the “Pro-

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fessional Identity” theme. The small group format allowed for meaningful discussions and the opportunity to learn from one another’s experiences and perspectives. One participant said, “I have been to many professional development events, but this one was truly unique. The format allowed for deep learning and reflection, and I left feeling energized and inspired.”

Kudos to the facilitators and supervisors who held space for the learnings to emerge. The event ended with the realization of how crucial

belonging is for each of us and gratitude toward SAATA and the MLL for providing opportunities that make us feel a sense of belonging through our professional identities.

Overall, the in-person multi-level learning event was a great success and a powerful reminder of the importance of connecting with others in our professional lives. The SAATA team is already looking forward to next year’s event and to the opportunity to continue to support the growth and development of its members. 

## International Trainers’ Meeting

**Challenges – Changes – Chances  
of TA Training in Uncertain Times**

**4 July 2023 in North Dublin, Ireland**

**All TA trainers from EATA and ITAA are welcome!**

Recent years have been dominated by the climate crises, the pandemic, and an ongoing war in Europe. These drastic events have accelerated a development that had already begun: the digital revolution, which massively influenced and changed both our professional and social lives. On this international trainers’ day, we will gather together to explore these influences on our training culture and TA culture in general as well as discuss how we can best integrate these developments. We invite you to reconnect with professional and personal relationships and to engage in theoretical and practical constructive exchange. The purpose is to enhance discussions related to training and professional development. We look forward to gathering with you!

The trainer’s day will be on 4 July 2023 (10am - 4pm), between 2 days of EATA Council meetings and 2 days of EATA exams. (The ITAA Board will also meet in Dublin on 7-8 July.) The venue is the Grand Hotel Malahide ([www.thegrand.ie](http://www.thegrand.ie)), 10 minutes from the Dublin airport. You can book a hotel room from an EATA contingent (different categories). Participation in the trainers’ day is free (tea, coffee, and light lunch included). To register, email to Marianne Rauter ([office@eatanews.eu](mailto:office@eatanews.eu)) by the end of April.

# Power, Identity, Other: Reflections on the 2023 Multi-Level Learning Conference in Bangalore

by Elana Leigh

**A**rriving back in India after 3 years of pandemic-induced absence, I experienced everything as if for the first time while also holding my long history with the country, culture, and community. On reengaging with this TA community while attending the 2023 Multi-Level Learning event, I experienced its exponential growth and development. Today SAATA is a strong professional regional body that claims and embodies its own cultural and professional identity.

Explorations of issues of power and identity at the personal, professional, and community level stimulated and enriched our conversation and learning. These discussions steered us into valuable and heartening territory where we found ourselves grappling with issues between and among us: issues of power, gender, politics, caste, socioeconomic class, and generational differences. In our explorations over the 2 days, I witnessed and experienced a community that lives, breathes, and genuinely works with (as opposed to intellectualizing about) these rich, complex, and often fraught issues. I

witnessed the courage to speak out, name observations, own projections, and stay connected through difference and disruptions.

In my otherness as a White, Western, middle-class woman, I also noted, reflected, and questioned issues about myself and the sea that I swim in, particularly those pertaining to race, power, class, and prejudice. Such questions are not new

*“In my otherness as a White, Western, middle-class woman, I also noted, reflected, and questioned issues about myself and the sea that I swim in, particularly those pertaining to race, power, class, and prejudice.”*

for me given both my South African identity and my 25-year association with this community. The difference this year was that I was not alone in raising these matters because there was an ease in identifying and talking collectively about these and many additional complex thoughts, observations, and feelings.



My close working relationship with current ITAA President Chitra Ravi, who is Indian, has exposed me to a minefield of racism at the interpersonal level. During our 4 years working together, we navigated her move from the role of president-elect to president and my transition into the role of past president. On this journey, we encountered many instances when we were forced to grapple with the question of whether difficulties we encountered between us and/or from the broader community reflected racism, personality, or both. We were able, for example, to address issues of power disparities inherent in my Whiteness and her Brownness while staying open and reflective, however complex the moments felt.

**“Our intention needs to be in working with these differences and conflicts, even when we do not necessarily like them. The MLL reminded me that perhaps the real danger in groups lies in striving for warm and fuzzy sameness.”**

We also deliberated on the experiences of other colleagues of color who felt aggrieved and racially discriminated against by members of the broader international community when they appeared to dismiss contributions by certain people of color but showed enthusiasm to White members. After lengthy discussion, it became clear that it was not as straightforward as we thought and that to simply proclaim that to be an act of racism disavows other factors, such as a colleague’s deep insecurity about their thinking, worth, class, and/or caste origins.

Such examples precipitated further reflections on issues of power and difference. I found myself wondering whether, when power and vulnerability collide, feeling aggrieved can become conflated with an experience of racism, prejudice, sexism, and other isms. We all, on the individual and collective level, are thus morally bound to be open to examining and exploring these multiple possibilities. While it is always incumbent on us to be open to multiple interpretations and subjective responses, this is crucial when we hold positions of power, no matter our color, gender, class, or race, because discriminatory behavior knows not the difference, and simultaneously, no group holds the

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monopoly of being Victim, Persecutor, or Rescuer.

The presence of a Russian member and an Iranian member at the MLL prompted me to think about the difference between real and projected safety. I thought about how a group remains safe when the members abide by the group culture, but that one never really knows when this safety will be threatened by someone who steps outside the group norm. The otherness of the Russian and Iranian learners, highlighted by their different backgrounds and traumas, challenged the group culture. They helped the Indian members of the group notice that their former experience of safety was perhaps induced by their being a predominantly homogeneous Indian group (even with all their internal differences) and that this experience was perhaps, therefore, an illusion. The challenge to homogeneity—and hence to both the prevailing group culture and the illusion of safety—became an opportunity for new parameters to be found. Genuine safety, I believe, lies in openly accepting difference. Our intention needs to be in working with these differences and conflicts, even when we do not necessarily like them. The MLL reminded me that perhaps the real danger in groups lies in striving for warm and fuzzy sameness.

The themes of identity and belonging provided a stimulating and constructive platform from which provocative and challenging issues could emerge. Many members attributed the freedom to share their thoughts and feelings to the safety they experienced in the group, a reminder of the universal desire to feel free to express oneself. Meanwhile, many of us deeply appreciated how the community’s genuine commitment to being open to the

struggle around difference helped us, in all our various otherness’s, to feel accepted—a reminder of the universal need to belong.

I am acutely aware that I am writing this brief article as a senior White woman in our organization, and with that comes many privileges, implicit and explicit. I realize that my privileged position leads me to make assumptions and reach momentary or embedded conclusions, and these undoubtedly, consciously and unconsciously, inform and are informed through who I am, who I want to be, who I feel ashamed to be, and who I want people to see me as. Perhaps I am even writing this disclaimer to cover my back because writing about sensitive issues carries a risk. But in honor of the practice of the open dialogue that shaped and held our learning conference at the MLL, I do not wish to hide behind the risk and thereby risk saying nothing.

I fly home with new insights about personal, political, and professional aspects of myself, and I end this piece by acknowledging my gratitude and respect to SAATA for the inside and outside work that they do as a professional community. 🌱

## Conference Calendar

**21–23 April 2023**

**UKATA National Conference**  
[www.uka4ta.co.uk/event-details/ukata-national-conference-2023-1](http://www.uka4ta.co.uk/event-details/ukata-national-conference-2023-1)

**23–24 September 2023**

**SAATA Conference,  
Bangaluru, India**

**19–21 April 2024**

**UKATA National Conference**

## April TAJ Reflects New Developments

The April 2023 *Transactional Analysis Journal (TAJ)* will be available soon and contains an interesting array of articles, essays, reflections, and letters. In her “Letter From the Coeditor,” Trudi Newton describes not only a bit about this issue but also some new directions the coeditors will be taking the TAJ. Here is part of what she wrote:

When we share our understanding and encounters through our ongoing discourse is when writing, reading, and reflecting are most meaningful.

This issue of the *Transactional Analysis Journal (TAJ)* is a demonstration of that process. Changes are happening, and we are learning fast. You may have read in Helen Rowland’s (2022) piece in *The Script* about how we are planning to widen the scope of contributions to the *Journal*. A lively and energetic discussion among the editorial board members last September led to some new ideas and perspectives that are beginning to manifest here.

Before describing the individual contributions in this issue, I want to consider some of the principles and implications of this new revitalization. One has to do with the responsibilities of authorship and conversely the anxieties that new and/or aspiring authors inevitably experience. We do have criteria

and requirements as a journal that makes a serious academic contribution, and we will keep those in place. We do expect authors to contextualize their ideas, to review thoroughly the TA and other literature relevant to their writing, and to be respectful and OK-OK to other writers (even when there are profound differences). We will continue to see our editing as a developmental and supportive process when needed and to confront work that needs more attention to reach the expected standard. We will encourage academic debate and avoid being doctrinaire or dogmatic. And we remind ourselves that the TAJ has an important role in teaching and training, in all fields of TA application. Students

and trainees are using new articles as well as older and revered sources to increase their learning and stimulate their thinking and creativity. We are all in an ongoing conversation, exchanging and expanding ideas as we engage in our collegial dialogue.

Linked to all of this is the issue of academic acceptability. In her article in *The Script*, Helen wrote:

One of the themes that emerged in the group discussions was around the academic tone of the *Journal*, which brought us to thinking as a group about accessibility on two different levels: first, regarding the “readability” of articles for readers who do

12

APRIL 2023

THE SCRIPT

### TAJ Theme Issues

#### “Leadership”

Coeditors: Sue Eusden and Giles Barrow | Deadline: 1 August 2023

#### “Intimacy and Creativity Within the Real Self: Revisiting Berne’s Secret Garden”

Coeditors: Edward T. Novak and Karen Minikin | Deadline: 1 February 2024

#### “Relationships in Love, Play, and Work”

Coeditors: Brad McLean and Helen Rowland | Deadline: 1 August 2024

Please follow the submission requirements posted [here](#). Email manuscripts to TAJ Managing Editor Robin Fryer, MSW, at [robinfryer@aol.com](mailto:robinfryer@aol.com).

not come from a conventional academic background or for whom English is a second language, and second, how to make the *Journal* more accessible for new writers or writers who lack academic confidence. (Rowland, 2022, p. 8)

Although “international” has been part of our name since the ITAA’s founding in 1964, that word has taken on new meaning in the intervening years. We are now a genuinely global organization, and the *TAJ* reflects that in the range and diversity of our contributions and contributors. Language, culture, diversity, and social responsibility; special issues on neurodiversity,

systemic oppression, and normativity; greater attention to research articles from many countries; republishing articles translated into English after publication elsewhere in other languages; completely new areas such as eco-TA—are all examples of the widening scope of the *Journal* . . .


Another clear takeaway from the editorial board meeting, and an ongoing discussion among the coeditor team, is the possibility of a wider range in the type of contributions we publish in the *TAJ*. So far we have mostly published articles, book reviews, and sometimes letters. We hope and intend from now on to expand these to include, for instance, commentaries on pub-

lished articles, essay-type pieces, debate and discussion through the exchange of letters and responses to those—all of which you will read in this issue. Hopefully, to come later, will be shorter pieces (perhaps from new writers) and interviews, and we will be open to other ideas as they come up.

The articles in this issue include the following:

- “Transactional Analysis and Relationship Psychotherapy: A Need for Renewed Interest and Contemporary Thinking” by Brad McLean
- “From Rackets to Pacifiers: A Humanistic Approach” by Anisha Pandya
- “Nourish: A Framework for Nourishing Eating-Disordered Clients Using a Structural and Relational Methodology” by Mandy Atkinson
- “Identity, Groups, and the Making of a Deviant: The Group’s Use of Deviants in Maintaining Its Collective Identity” by Ales Zivkovic
- “Transcending the Edge of Connectedness: Screen Relationships in Practice” by Ronen Stilman
- “Therapy at the Window: Can TA Be ‘Framed?’” by Pietro Cardile
- “On Pandya’s Article ‘Touching Practice: Exploring Relational Aspects of Clinical Touch Within Traumatized Ego States’ ” by Edward T. Novak
- “A Response to Berlin and Berlin” by Ray Little
- “A Response to Little’s ‘A Response to Berlin and Berlin’ ” by Alistair Berlin and Megan Berlin

#### Reference

Rowland, H. (2022). Evolving directions in the *TAJ*. *The Script*, 52(12), 8–9. 

## Free-Access *TAJ* Articles Offer an Opportunity to Reach Beyond the TA Community

Thanks to the support of Routledge/Taylor & Francis, we are able to offer one article from each issue of the *TAJ* for free for 3 months following publication. The idea behind this was to provide a way for *TAJ* readers to share with their colleagues and friends outside of the TA community an article that might spark their interest in TA and the *TAJ*. The article is chosen by the coeditor(s) of each issue based on their sense of what might be of particular interest and/or relevance beyond the TA world. Thus, the article that is chosen does not reflect the “best” or the “most popular” article and in no way diminishes the other articles/authors in that issue.

For example, from the January 2023 *TAJ*, the coeditors decided to make the article “Revisiting Ecological Transactional Analysis: Emerging Perspectives” by Giles Barrow and Hayley Marshall free access until the end of March because it provided a retrospective look at the initial phase in the creation of ecological transactional analysis as well as developments since then. We believe these ideas are of significant interest to readers outside the TA community as well, especially the authors’ articulation of a new concept—the ecological mind—which is designed to support the evolution of eco-TA.

We encourage all *TAJ* readers to use this important opportunity to encourage your colleagues and friends to learn more about contemporary transactional analysis. Once the April issue is out, you will find the free-access article from that issue available on the Taylor & Francis *TAJ* website. Look for the green checkmark in the lower right corner.

# What Is Ethical Thinking?

by Jan Grant

**W**e all face ethical issues in our lives. We may be asked to do something at work that does not feel right, or perhaps we have to follow laws that we do not agree with. In this article, I outline a method for thinking through ethical dilemmas.

The *Oxford Dictionary* defines ethics as “moral principles, rules of conduct,” but where do these come from? They come from our own moral compass of what we believe is right and wrong and our own values: literally the things we value. They also come from professional standards and codes of practice and what is expected of us in our professional roles. Tim Bond (2005) draws it like this, with the counselor in the center of six sources of professional ethics:

Ethical dilemmas can occur in any one of these spheres and sometimes arise when there are contradictory messages coming from different spheres. Having a safe space to think through complex issues is invaluable. Supervision is one such place.

An example from my counseling practice is that recently I felt concerned about one of the partners in a couple I have been seeing. Both partners have demanding jobs, and one partner seems depressed. This is not only impacting her, but also her partner. I know that she also has an individual counselor, so I asked her permission to speak with that professional. Having received permission, I phoned the other counselor, and the first thing she asked was, “Do you have the client’s permission to speak with me?” I was happy to say that I did. When we are faced with

an issue of concern, what can we do? Bond outlined a six-step process for ethical problem solving that I find helpful (Bond, 2005, pp. 223–236):

1. Give a brief description of the ethical dilemma.
2. Identify whose dilemma it is. Is it mine? Is it the client’s? Is it both? Is it someone else’s?
3. What ethical principles and guidelines are relevant?
4. Identify all possible courses of action.
5. Select the best course of action.
6. Evaluate the outcome.

Returning to my example, steps 1, 2, and 4 were at play there. My personal ethics involve a strong value on autonomy, just as my TA training does. I am in private practice, so I did not need to consider agency policy. The professional codes of practice of both ITAA and PACFA (Psychotherapists and Counsellors Federation of Australia) both strongly emphasize protecting client confidentiality. Lastly, there was no legal issue involved here. So, I felt comfortable with my course of action.

## Reference

Bond, T. (2005). *Standards and ethics for counselling in action*. Sage. [S](#)

