THE Script

VOL. 55 NO. 9 | SEPTEMBER 2025

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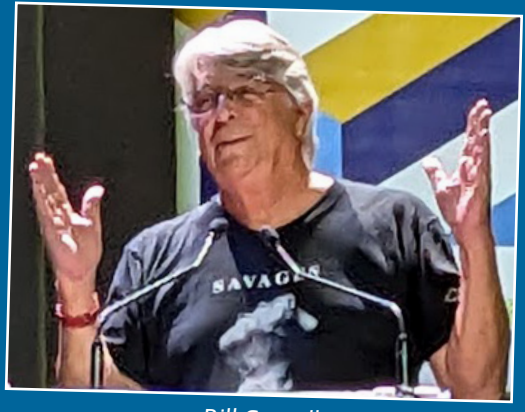
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Outstanding Keynotes Headline Montpellier World TA Conference 2025

Almost 900 TA enthusiasts gathered over a hot three days in Montpellier, France, to explore the theme of "Legacy, Legitimacy, and Identity," and without a doubt, the highlight for most participants was the three remarkable keynote speeches. All three speakers received resounding standing ovations, and on several occasions, many in the audience were brought to tears.

Bill Cornell gave the opening speech entitled "Eric Berne: Euhemerus/Human Being." He described how Berne was a "brilliant, provocative, driven, and deeply wounded human being" and thus both "inspiring and flawed" as TA's euhemerus. He suggested that the conference theme asks us to address the "troubled areas of Berne's legacy, those of legitimacy and identity." Although the euhemerus provides a group with "comfort and identity, the downside is the group all too often stops thinking about itself" and may lose its "self-reflective capacities."



Bill Cornell

Bill drew on the model of transgenerational haunting as developed by Maurice Apprey, describing himself as one of the "second generation" of transactional analysts and that he was mostly talking to the third generation. Berne's use of "ordinary" words, a part of his legacy that "raises questions of legitimacy with which we continue to struggle to this day," contributed to TA's reputation as a "pop psychology" that "too often turned the broader professional communities away from seeing the depth of TA."

At the time of his death, Berne was beginning to "rethink his work" and to "confront the effects of his fostering TA as better than any other modality." Bill went on to talk about the effect of Berne's early death on



Conference opening ceremony

the TA first generation and how they "moved to idealize him," and having inherited his "competitiveness and arrogance," quickly "splintered in competitive, theoretical silos—the 3 'schools of TA.' . . . TA, and transactional analysts, became inwardly focused" and freedom to think was not encouraged." Bill noted, "Berne failed to model or teach his first-generation colleagues to be curious and respectful of other modalities. . . . Instead, he modeled competition."

Bill then turned from considering Berne "as euhemerus to Berne, the human being." He described how in *A Montreal Childhood*, Berne described "the tragic loss of his beloved father, the loss of the family's prestige, his adolescent social awkwardness, the antisemitism he endured, and his social isolation—none of which was ever revealed in his public writings." Bill said he "began to understand the problematic aspects of Berne's work as not so much paranoid . . . but more a manic denial." Being investigated in the US as a supposed Communist sympathizer and losing his job led Berne to try to protect his followers by "explicitly separating TA from any political engagement," a prescription we as a community are still mostly following. And then there was his rejection by the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Society.

Bill described how Berne kept "all of these traumatic experiences secret, but [they] provided a kind of disturbed psychic fuel for the splits and contradictions in his work." In Berne's writings, Bill found "no discussions of loss, grief, or mourning." He quoted several other authors (Heathcote, English, Oates and Deaconu) to underscore that "as a professional community we need to be able to disagree with each other, sometimes passionately, and still be able to see what the other has to offer. . . . It is crucial that we not blame or demonize Berne as some sort of bad or failed euhemerus. Our struggle with his legacy is a human struggle of learning, loyalty, and woundedness in the face of personal and organizational secrets. . . . I have no doubt that it was Berne's aspiration that his patients, his professional followers, and subsequent generations would lead better lives. I doubt that it was his intention to also weigh our TA generations with his own unresolved wounds of loss and marginalization." He went on to say, "These are the urgencies, the undoings, the detoxification that we are asked to address in this conference. It is time to free ourselves from Berne's painful errand, and it is typically the third generation that has the psychological freedom to complete the task."

Bill then touched on five areas that he views as crucial as we pass the torch from the second to the third generation: training and certification, theory development, the expansion of TA applications beyond psychotherapy, TA literature, and research. After discussing these briefly, he moved on to share on a very personal level about the death of his son Caleb last summer and how the past year "has been a year of relentless grief for me, his partner, his friends, and my family." He described Caleb's devotion to creating communities for "those so often ostracized and marginalized" and *The Script* article Caleb wrote following the Columbine school shootings in which he described his own experiences of being bullied and identifying with the shooters. "Caleb did not succumb to his fury, he made use of it. He devoted his life to creating communities of safety."

Bill called it a "luxury" to mourn Caleb's death, in contrast to those in Ukraine, Gaza, and Israel, who do not have the luxury or safety to mourn. He challenged WTAC 2025 participants to recognize "the limits and dangers of being an inward-facing, self-isolating community . . . to turn energy, focus from an inward protectiveness to places of holding sufficient narcissistic vitality to look OUT, to engage with the thinking, the values, and the work of those different from us. Even those who may be in conflict with us." He closed by saying, "I see the third generation



ITAA hybrid AGM in Montpellier and on Zoom

having the responsibility and the capacity to continue untying the knots and limits of Berne's unconscious transgenerational legacy of isolation and inward looking. . . . Don't be 'special.' Be curious." He suggested joining other professional communities, presenting at non-TA conferences, writing for non-TA journals, hanging out with colleagues who may not know anything about TA, reading things you don't agree with and thinking about them anyway. "This is how each and every one of us can contribute to keeping TA vital and growing."

Isabelle Filliozat spoke on the second day about "Legacy When Your Father Is One of the Founders of TA in Europe." In terms of legacy, Isabelle began by talking about her parents' project to raise children without any violence. She described her own path as a group and individual psychotherapist and author championing the rights of children and how it "took me years of therapy to sort out parental influences and my own desires, to reclaim my own identity, and finally to fully embrace the aims of my parents."

When she was 17 she attended her first TA 101, which was organized by her father, Rémy Filliozat. He was a pioneer of TA in France and took part in creating the Institut Français d'Analyse Transactionnelle (IFAT). He shared many values with Berne, including promoting health and nonviolent relationships and a therapy that was aimed at "empowering the



Isabelle Filliozat

client." He was also involved with EATA and signed a contract between CFIP and IFAT for the publication of a French-language scientific journal: *Actualités en Analyse Transactionnelle*. Rémy also cocreated the Raymond Hostie Prize, became a Teaching Member, and gave numerous TA 101s until he was 78 years old.

Isabelle went on to describe how both of her parents experienced "a great deal of violence in their respective childhoods . . . and had married with the project of raising children without any violence. I was never punished, dismissed, bribed, threatened, mocked, or ignored. They always listened to me. . . . I had a secure attachment."

In discussing legitimacy, Isabelle talked about certification in TA and how she is certified by IFAT but not by EATA. She sat for her exam at age 27 but failed, which was a surprise to her, her therapist, and her supervisor. She talked about how something was "wrong" in the exam process, with one of the examiners asking unclear and confusing questions that she kept trying to answer. With great candor, Isabelle described what had happened: The night before her exam, she had had a massage to help her relax, and "somebody had touched my genitals without my permission. And that was rape." "As any victim of sexual abuse, I was first stunned, paralyzed, then dissociated." Isabelle called her father, who listened to her for a long time. She was traumatized "but didn't fully realize it."

Isabelle then talked about the theory of trauma, beginning with Freud and how, after his initial theories were rejected, "by choosing the Oedipus complex over the reality of incest, Freud laid the foundation of psychoanalysis. But he did so at the cost of silencing countless real stories of abuse." Using her own traumatic experience the night before her exam, she described how the victim does all she can to hide her feelings, to place herself at the service of her aggressor, exactly the overadaptation described by the Schiffs. "My



Current and previous EBMA winners in Montpellier (from left): Servaas van Beekum, Bill Cornell, Trudi Newton, Marco Mazzetti, Keith Tudor, Zefiro Mellacqua, Graeme Summers, and Helena Hargaden

nervous system was eager to take care of the needs of a potential aggressor [the confusing questioner/examiner]. It helped me put aside my own feelings, to continue to disconnect. I was answering too quickly to the symbiotic invitations of my [exam] questioner. Reading his mind, guessing and answering the questions he didn't ask. I was at his service."

Isabelle continued by discussing Stephen Porges's polyvagal theory and trauma reactions. She talked about how she and one of her examiners were in a symbiosis, hypothesizing that he "was caught in the countertransference . . . in dissociation and confusion, mirroring my inner state with no clue to understand what was going on. All five of us during the exam felt there was something wrong, but none of us got the significance of the problem [or] had the idea that anything could be done about it. That's why we didn't call the rover! The discount was contagious. All five of us shared it. . . . We were in a game." Based on her own experience, Isabelle then made some suggestions for ways to help avoid that kind of situation in exams.

On returning home after her exam, Isabelle used her "Adult to build a sufficiently efficient story in order to thrive and access resilience, and make the best of the worst. Maintain a cohesive identity. But . . . I excluded a part of me." She described how at that time in France "the culture around rape was not there yet. . . . We labeled the event 'sexual abuse attempt,' rape attempt as if it was not really a rape. But nowadays, any penetration is labeled rape." To handle not wanting to acknowledge the true feelings, she had to blame someone: the examiner, exams, the board. "I distrusted the board instead of acknowledging the complete game and what was going on inside of me." Isabelle made a decision: "I don't belong. . . . I discounted the TA exam process, I decided not to take it again. I would go my own path." She quit the TA world, her father's world, but "it was a lie to myself. I understand now that in reality I didn't take the exam again because I didn't want to be exposed to the reminiscence of the trauma."

Isabelle acknowledged that she didn't feel like she belonged in the TA community, but "I quit my limiting belief. Of course I belong! TA is my nurture. It gives my work structure. . . . TA stayed a basic model for me." She described identity as a tapestry: "The more conscious, the freer we are, the more beautiful the tapestry will be. . . . It's through the repairing process that motives appear. Similarly, beautiful music is not always perfect harmony. The beauty often lies in how it handles dissonance. . . . What truly matters



Diana Deaconu (left) and Steff Oates in their workshop on "Making Room for Questions: Inquiries Into the Theory and Methods of TA Psychotherapy"



Indian participants in Montpellier following Sailaja Manacha's keynote (from left): Piyush Dikshit, Suresh Kewalramani, Prachin Dikshit, Aruna Gopakumar, Sailaja Manacha, Anisha Pandya, Suriyaprakash C, Rajeshwari Bharath, Rhythm Aggarwal

is not perfect attunement . . . [but] the ability to repair ruptures, which builds trust, intimacy, and resilience. . . . But to repair, we have to acknowledge the trauma."

In conclusion, Isabelle described TA as a "robust and flexible psychological model because it is grounded in observable behavior, clear structural concepts, and a strong emphasis on relational dynamics. Its foundational concepts offer a coherent framework for understanding human experience while remaining open to integration with new scientific findings. . . . Legacies put responsibility on us. Our identity is embedded in how we answer those questions asked by our ancestors. . . . Let's continue to weave the TA tapestry. I'm so grateful my dad met TA 50 years ago!"

Sailaja Manacha closed the conference program with her keynote on "A Journey to Identity for Women in Leadership." She began with a question: "What is it like to have space around you to be who you are and who you wish to be?" She described that as a youngster, she did not



Sailaja Manacha

have to conform "too much to conventional definitions of a woman in India and received permissions to be who she wished to be." This was in contrast to the outside world, which was a "mosaic of strict gender rules and traditions." Then in 2010, in a women-only workshop, she experienced "a deep vulnerable sharing" that she had not experienced before in mixed-gender groups. This led her to begin offering 3- and 6-month personal development circles for women. In 2013 she took her model, combined with TA and Generative Leadership, into corporations. In 2018 she launched a digital product called "Step Up," which "put access to learning and growth in the hands of women and not their organization or their leader." Thousands of women have used it, and Sailaja then wrote a book entitled *Step Up*, which "became the frame for my leadership work with mid to senior career women." She believed that "there was an opportunity for these leaders to pivot and go beyond . . . midlife crisis and the professional glass ceiling." This led to a senior women leadership program called "Power Up," which has become a multiyear coaching intervention. In 2025, Sailaja partnered with Suriyaprakash C to begin The Men's Circle, a men's-only personal growth initiative in which they have witnessed "men work with the burden of patriarchy."

Sailaja then spoke about what constitutes good leadership, asking the audience to recall the experience of being in the presence of such a leader. She shared "every time I have asked this question, most people report something visceral and somatic." They felt safe or strong or calmer, seen or lighter, touched in



Cathy McQuaid, Andy Williams, and Karina Helligers in their workshop on "It Will Never Happen to Me! Professional Complaints: Context, Complexity, and Compassion"

some way, more enabled for action. "This is what good leadership does; it moves you with its care." She contrasted passion and purpose with care, which makes us generous. She quoted Gianpiero Petriglieri: "Leadership is a kind of love declared with courage and shown with care." She then discussed various ways of viewing leadership and how complex it is in today's world due to changes in social, economic, and environmental factors. Although in India the command and control style still exists, it no longer works well in the technology and services world, where the call is for "increasing collaboration, empathy, and enhanced conversational intelligence with all stakeholders." She also quoted Barrow and Marshall about how the "misuse of power . . . has led to devastating and destructive acts that are inflicted on humanity" and her wish to emphasize the significance of sustainability. "Today and for the future the world needs leaders with a strong spine and an open heart, a phrase at the core of my work."

Returning to her work with women leaders, Sailaja described how "the intent of my leadership work with women is to rehumanize leadership and to make it account for emotions, relational intelligence, well-being, our life-stage questions, and our spirit-related questions. . . . I ask can we as women leaders think about our work as a place of satisfaction, fulfillment, and meaning? Can we celebrate how we bring our feminine values to action in the workplace?" She then shared some gender data and acknowledged the problems faced by women in the workplace. "There is no playbook for women to overcome their own limiting beliefs and access their potential." It helps to have, as she did, a line of strong women in her family upon whose shoulders she stands.

In terms of ideas from TA that Sailaja has found especially helpful in her work with women leaders, she mentioned understanding ego state content, the functional fluency model, identifying injunctions as stoppers and permissions as abundance mantras, history as the sculptor of our being, the Cultural Parent, and life positions and the OK Corral. She also acknowledged the importance of generative leadership with her teacher Bob Dunham; Indian feminine archetypes; working with body script, sound, and music; the spirit of conscious leadership and spirituality; and the map of consciousness (David Hawkins).

At the end of her speech, Sailaja said, "May we as a community find the energy to walk at times alone and at times together." She then invited the audience to do this with a song that "calls us to learn to lead in love in these times. It inspires us to appreciate the good company we keep and go deep into 'the well,' our source of our creativity, connection, and ability to thrive." She sang first with a beautiful voice and then encouraged those present to join in, which they did with deep resonance and feeling. It was an immensely moving time of shared experience to end the conference.

Of course, WTAC 2025 consisted of a great deal more than the three moving keynotes.

The week began with exams, with 7 TSTA candidates from Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Romania, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. There were also 24 CTA candidates, all of whom passed! There were 8 exams in French, with candidates from France, Switzerland, and Belgium. There were 16 exams in English, with candidates from the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, Russia, and Ukraine. (Watch future *Scripts* for more details.)

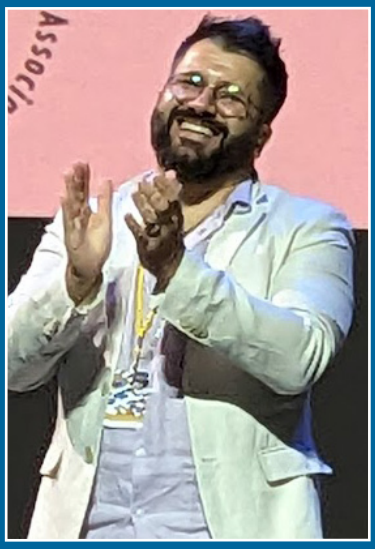
Over the three days of the conference there were **126 workshops given by 178 experts** covering a wide range of topics in all four fields of TA practice. In addition, there were **two debates, one moderated by Lucy Freedman and the other by Karen Pratt.**

At the end of the day on Friday, the large meeting hall was packed for the **ITAA Awards ceremony honoring five recipients:** Michelle Thomé and John Oates for their ITAA Service Awards, Roland Johnsson for his 2025 ITAA Research Award, Zefiro Mellacqua as he received his plaque for his 2024 Eric Berne Memorial Award, and Keith Tudor for his 2025 Eric Berne Memorial Award. (See the October *Script* for more on these awards.)

On Saturday morning early, the **ITAA held a hybrid Annual General Membership meeting** for members who were there as well as others who attended via Zoom. (For more on this see Marguerite Sacco's article on page 8 of this *Script*.)

As is traditional at TA conferences, there were two fantastic parties. On Friday night participants gathered at Le Corum to celebrate the conference but also the 50th anniversary of TA in France. There was live music, dancing, tasty tidbits to eat, and an opportunity to talk with people. Then on Saturday night there was a gala extravaganza. Over 200 guests were bussed to a country farmhouse where, on arrival, they were given a French straw hat and invited to ring the bell at a "champagne wall" (an artificial hedge), which resulted in a white-gloved hand appearing through the hedge holding a glass of champagne, all accompanied by an accordionist. In the large courtyard, food trucks provided excellent food and wine from six regions of France. The entertainment was a drag artist accompanied by two women singers with an array of larger-than-life costumes, wigs, and superb singing voices performing a selection of dance numbers from the 1970s and 1980s. Many people were on the dance floor for the whole show.

Conference organizer Jean-Luc Boyer, the conference organizing committee, the volunteers, and everyone else on the team deserve a huge thank you and much credit for putting together such an enormous and successful World TA Conference. Many, many thanks to them all!



Conference organizer Jean-Luc Boyer

TAJ Editorial Board Members Sought

The *Transactional Analysis Journal* coeditors are looking for new members to join the editorial board. If you are interested in becoming a reviewer, please email your name, country, and a brief statement about your areas of interest/expertise and your experience in writing and/or editing to *TAJ* Managing Editor Robin Fryer at robinfryer@aol.com by 1 October.

Free-Access Article Available From the July 2025 *TAJ*

From the July 2025 *Transactional Analysis Journal* theme issue on "Relationships in Love, Play, and Work," **the free-access article is "Transactional Analysis and Relationship Psychotherapy: Decontamination and Deconfusion of Ego State Relationship Structures" by Brad McLean.**

The article offers a framework for a structured approach to relationship psychotherapy grounded in transactional analysis. McLean uses the transactional analysis concepts of decontamination and deconfusion to outline a staged treatment process. This process integrates cognitive strategies to strengthen the relationship "Adult," thereby laying the foundation for a deeper exploration of unconscious dynamics within the relationship "Child." Consideration is also given to the influence of relationship "Parent" introjects. This approach is integrative and incorporates contemporary, evidence-based practices from the broader field of relationship psychotherapy into the familiar transactional analysis treatment sequence.

We encourage all *Script* readers to read this article and to use this important opportunity to encourage your colleagues and friends to learn more about contemporary transactional analysis. **You will find the free-access article from the July issue available on the Taylor & Francis *TAJ* website** (accessible for ITAA members via the ITAA website and to nonmembers by searching on *Transactional Analysis Journal*). Look for the green check in the lower right corner.

Becoming the President of the ITAA

by Marguerite Sacco



My years on the ITAA Board of Trustees/Directors have deepened my connection to our organization and strengthened my commitment to serving its diverse, global membership. It is in this spirit that I am honored to move into the role of ITAA President.

My vision for my tenure as president is to foster collaboration, inclusion, and the open exchange of ideas. This vision is informed by my work as an organizational PTSTA in South Africa, where I have applied TA principles across industries working with people at every level—from factory floor sweepers to trade union organizers and officials, and from line managers to CEOs.

My professional journey began in the 1980s, during South Africa's struggle against Apartheid. At that time, the Black labor movement rose as a powerful force for political, economic, and social change. Out of these struggles grew a lasting tradition of consultation, negotiation, and dialogue—rights now embedded in our constitution: to speak up, to be heard, and to participate in decisions that affect us. **These principles—inclusion, respectful disagreement, and constructive resolution—will be my guide** as I work with you to strengthen and grow the ITAA.

My aspiration as president-elect over the last year has been to sustain the ITAA's mission and amplify membership initiatives to extend the global impact of transactional analysis and the ITAA. I have been fortunate to work alongside a committed, dynamic, and passionate board of directors. The bond we share gives me confidence, knowing they will both support and challenge me when needed to help us find the best way forward. With such an exceptional team, I am certain we can work together for the good of the ITAA and its members.

Beyond the board, our dedicated volunteers serve in a wide range of committees. Each person plays a part in helping the ITAA function, thrive, and grow. I am deeply grateful for their contributions and wholeheartedly invite others to step forward and join us when opportunities arise.

World TA Conference 2025

The 2025 World TA Conference was a resounding success! Congratulations to the organizers for making it happen. It was a testament to the ability of the ITAA and EATA to collaborate effectively on such a large-scale endeavor. As with all events of this size, there were a few challenges along the way, mostly due to occasional misunderstandings and communication glitches. However, the overall result was highly positive, and the spirit of collegiality shone through. The conference committee will soon be calling for feedback so that future World Conferences jointly organized by ITAA and EATA can be even better. When that request comes, we encourage all members to share their insights.

Annual General Membership Meeting 2025

This year's AGM was held in Montpellier and online as a well-attended hybrid event. As with all AGMs, we began by completing the required formalities, including the acceptance of the previous minutes, followed

Marguerite Sacco is ITAA President and can be reached at president@itaaworld.com .

by the all-important review of our finances both past and projected. Our Finance Director, Mark Carrington, delivered an excellent presentation, clearly outlining our income and expenditures, balance sheets, and the budget for the coming year. The visual format made the information clear and accessible to everyone. Many thanks to Mark for the professional and engaging way he guided us through this important part of the meeting.

We then turned our attention to the future, introducing a new format to the AGM that allowed us to dedicate more of our meeting time to presenting the road ahead. This created the perfect opportunity to present the results of our March strategic planning session, during which the board defined four strategic objectives for the ITAA. To match this ambition, we paired each objective with a set of Big Hairy Audacious Goals (BHAGs)—bold, high-impact targets that, with determination and cooperation, we believe will create real and lasting value for our members (see details elsewhere on this page). These goals will demand significant input, effort, and dedication—and we invite you to join us as partners in bringing them to life. This is your opportunity, as ITAA members, to step in and participate!

Here are two ways you can help right away:

- **Read *The Script*:** Stay informed and respond when we put out calls for volunteers for committees or board roles.
- **Engage with us on social media:** Follow us on Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Share your TA-related experiences, achievements, and insights. When you see our posts, don't just "like" them—comment! Meaningful engagement boosts our visibility both within the TA community and in the wider world, helping more people discover the relevance and vibrancy of TA today.

Together, we can ensure that the ITAA continues to grow, innovate, and make an impact both within our professional community and beyond it. I look forward, with enthusiasm and determination, to a year of growth, commitment, and the advancement of the ITAA , its members, and our practice as professional transactional analysts.

Big Hairy Audacious Goals



Introducing the BHAGs (Big Hairy Audacious Goals) from the ITAA Board strategic planning meeting in March and presented at the ITAA AGM in Montpellier. The four strategic objectives outlined are as follows:

1. Accelerate membership growth and enhance engagement for sustainable community building (Marguerite for Vanessa Williams, former ITAA Director Development). The BHAG is a truly multilingual ITAA to reflect and serve our global membership. Tasks include looking into contractual and quality requirements for translation of the *TAJ*.

2.Establish ITAA as the global standard for transactional analysis certification and professional development (Thorsten Geck). The BHAG is an inclusive learning and certification process. Bring the IBOC into the new professional association to be part of the new Learning and Development Department of the ITAA; TAWCS project proposal for modernizing exams for the next generation; global conversation (Giles Barrow and Karen Pratt): cultural diversity, social change, educational inclusion, and ecological sensibility; clarify the pathways to CTA and TSTA.

3. Drive global recognition and relevance of transactional analysis through strategic partnerships and brand elevation (Elvin Aydin Keles). The BHAGs are professional and academic recognition and advertising/branding of TA. Identify universities/colleges/business schools around the globe and engage in processes for TA recognition by these institutions; identify health profession councils, registration requirements, and obtain TA recognition by these councils around the world; effective and more interactive use of LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook; global marketing and branding campaigns; members to represent the ITAA and TA at HR, OD, Psychological, and Ed conferences in countries worldwide.

4. Optimize organizational effectiveness through streamlined governance, operational excellence, and inclusive practices (Anne Tucker). The BHAGs are ensuring that systems are set up and/or improved to ensure all membership initiatives are successful; automating the members database; automating membership renewals (opt out system); integrating information systems and records; following up on DEIA project; implementing recommendations from the project team.

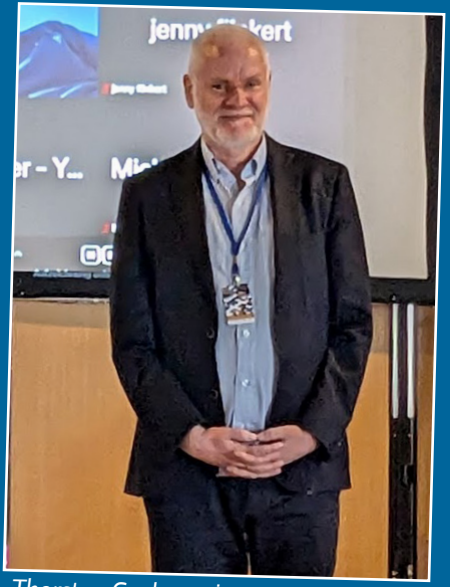
We Are Almost There—What's Next?

by Thorsten Geck

When I became president years ago, my mission was clear: to prepare and implement the transition of the ITAA from a public benefit organization to a professional association in such a way that it would be viable, serve its members, and move into regular operations without disruption. In essence, this meant placing the interests of our members more clearly at the center, bringing certification back into the organization as a core service, and thereby strengthening the professional visibility and credibility of our community for the long term. This was possible because the members supported our proposal to establish a new association. Since December 2023, we have been recognized under California law as a professional association, opening up opportunities that go far beyond the scope of a traditional nonprofit.

What made this task easier was working with a dedicated management board. Its composition has changed over the years, but it has consistently cultivated a culture of reliability, responsibility, and shared learning. It was also invaluable to draw on the organization's many years of experience, which provided guidance in countless detailed matters. For both of these, I am deeply grateful and want to express my sincere thanks to the board for its ongoing support.

The more difficult part, however, was navigating the intricacies—or rather, the pitfalls—of California association and tax law. Two legally distinct associations with similar names proved confusing for the authorities; we waited months for a tax number, and only with its assignment did we formally exist and become able to conduct business. Added to this was a narrow interpretation of our statutory purposes and the permitted use of funds, which slowed down decisions and required repeated clarifications. During this time, I was often asked about the balance of power within the ITAA. Our statutes and the law deliberately set clear boundaries for management—safeguarding transparency, oversight, and the protection of the association—but they also restrict the scope that we might well need for future development.



Thorsten Geck receives appreciation at the AGM for his work as ITAA President

Nevertheless, by July 2025 we had reached key milestones that made the change tangible. The separation of the ITAA Foundation and the ITAA has been completed: members' assets are now managed responsibly by the Foundation in their interest, and an association agreement ensures that both organizations can work together in promoting transactional analysis and advancing members' needs. All members have been transferred to the ITAA as a professional association, creating the foundation for a public membership directory in which colleagues can

present themselves visibly—within our community, to clients, and to the wider professional world. In addition, we have acquired the IBOC from the Foundation and are preparing its integration as a department of the ITAA so that certification—our core service—is once again directly anchored in the association. I take it as a positive sign that these changes do not feel "revolutionary" in daily life: Continuity has been preserved while the legal and organizational foundations have been fundamentally strengthened. At the same time, you can now rightly say that you belong to an association that has committed itself to high standards of professionalism—beyond the further development of TA theory.

With our new president, Marguerite Sacco, a new chapter is beginning. At the AGM, she presented an ambitious and wide-ranging program for the years ahead, and already members have come forward eager to take part. I would like to encourage all of you to consider joining in—whether by taking on responsibilities or contributing to specific projects. Any form of commitment helps advance our shared mission. At the same time, I believe an important internal dialogue awaits us: What does it truly mean to be a member of a professional association? Is CTA training—and beyond—simply continuing education, or does it mark the pathway to a professional identity? And is it acceptable to be a member if I "only" wish to support TA as a modality without qualifying as a CTA? My personal answer is clear: Yes, it is, because professionalism is also measured by how we recognize and foster diversity within our field.

My project as president—the transition of the ITAA—has taken longer than I initially hoped, but it is now nearly complete. I will use my time as past president to carefully guide the final steps. The past years have laid a solid foundation; the future is now in the hands of the new president and her team, and I am confident they will build on it, address the remaining challenges with determination, and continue to strengthen the ITAA as a professional home for us all.

I look forward to this final year as past president with excitement and with great confidence in what lies ahead for the ITAA.

Thorsten Geck, ITAA Past President, can be reached at deputy-president@itaa-world.com .

New Members

JULY 2025

Luisa Arecchi, Italy
Oleksandr Berezianskyi, Ukraine
Ganna Bilash, Ukraine
Stefania Codarcea, Netherlands
Kelly Donaldson, United Kingdom
Olexandra Gudkova, Ukraine
Suresh Kewalramani, India
Lokanath Koneru, India
Zhanar Mendybayeva, Kazakhstan
Aleksandra Radosavljevic Lukic, Serbia
Kanaka Ravi, India
Saurabh Raye, India
Lisa Rundle, United Kingdom
Ana Sič, Serbia
Nataša Simunović, Serbia
Femke Stolker, Netherlands
Katarina Tašev, Croatia
Nicola Wisbey, United Kingdom
Kateryna Yevseievycheva, Ukraine

Award Nominations Sought

Eric Berne Memorial Award

Deadline: 1 December 2025
Send EBMA nominations to ITAA Director of Research & Innovation Elvin Aydin Keles at director_r-i@itaaworld.com

Hedges Capers Humanitarian Award | ***Muriel James Living Principles Award*** | ***Goulding Social Justice Award*** | ***Fanita English Lifetime Achievement Award*** | ***ITAA Service Award***

Deadline: 1 January 2026
Send nominations for the Capers, James, Goulding, English, and Service Awards to ITAA Secretary Rema K Giridhar at general-secretary@itaaworld.com

ITAA Research Award

Deadline: 1 January 2026
Send nominations for the ITAA Research Award to committee chair Moniek Thunnissen at m.thunnissen@ziggo.nl

See the ITAA website at www.itaaworld.org/itaa-awards or contact the ITAA at info@itaaworld.org for details on making nominations for these awards.

New Board and Committee Members Join ITAA Team

We are pleased to announce that the following individuals have agreed to assume important positions within ITAA. We welcome them and look forward to working together on behalf of the ITAA membership.

Anne Tucker, Director of Operations

As she takes on the role of Director of Operations, Anne Tucker plans to concentrate on honing our systems and structures to support the ITAA strategic direction of supporting and sustaining our current members while encouraging new members to join. The committees under this portfolio include ethics, conferences, IT, and bylaws. Since Anne was on the ethics committee for about 5 years and worked extensively with Alex van Oostveen to update the ethics manual, she has a good grasp of many issues surrounding ethics. The emphasis on learning and growing through ethical dilemmas and experiences in contrast with looking for fault and "right and wrong" is a welcome change that encourages fully engaging with our Adult ego state and equipping us to find healthy ways of behaving. The conference committee will be chaired by newly appointed Keith Tudor, whom Anne is confident will find stimulating ways to build on the huge success of the World Conference in Montpellier. For the IT and bylaws committees, Anne will be looking with them at how to make our current systems run more smoothly and efficiently.



Sudha Thimmaiah, Director Professional Standards

Sudha Thimmaiah, TSTA (C), holds a master's in child psychology. She began as a counselor with a nonprofit organization in 1996 and was part of its management in creating and setting up standards for professional excellence and ethical practices. Today she is a counselor and conducts TA advanced training courses regularly. She has been an IBOC examiner several times and has attended exam written workshops and examiners workshops and has assisted the exam cochairs with supporting volunteers. Sudha believes strongly in maintaining professional standards of excellence. She comes from India, a country/region that has an enormous potential for growth in TA, but she is concerned about the lack of statutory laws there. She appreciates that TA has provided a platform for professionalism with its frameworks for standards of training, practice, a code of ethics, and certification. In her new position, she is interested in bringing cultural diversity and its nuances from different cultural perspectives to greater relevance and a level of understanding in TA.



Moniek Thunnissen, Research Award Committee Chair

Moniek, MD, PhD, TSTA, has always combined her research work with clinical practice, first in a psychotherapeutic institute, then in a mental hospital, and finally in private practice. In the last 5 years, Moniek has focused on conducting groups for supervision and intervision with psychiatrists, general practitioners, and other professionals in mental health care. She seeks to get TA acknowledged in The



Netherlands as an accredited form of psychotherapy and as part of the training for psychiatrists, psychologists, and psychotherapists. Moniek is the research coeditor for the *TAJ*, and in 2022 she received the ITAA Research Award. She hopes that the award will stimulate research in TA worldwide and is honored to become the chair of the Research Award Committee.

Jr.-Earn Lam, Cochair Professional Standards Committee

Jr.-Earn Lam took on this role because she wants to serve the TA community she loves and the modality that has empowered and equipped her to empower others. She is mindful and appreciative that much groundbreaking thought and work around professional standards has already taken place at multiple levels. At the "ground level," the Global Conversations, Change Makers, and work of the TA World Council of Standards have surfaced the hopes and needs of our evolving and increasingly international TA community. At the leadership level, two of four strategic thrusts shared by the Board of Directors at the 2025 Annual General Membership meeting pertained to accreditation, certification, and professional development. The future looks exciting! Together with PSC cochair Beatrijs Djikman, Earn will draw on her experiences in adult education and accreditation, and in public policy formulation, to work with key stakeholders toward TA as a field that does meaningful work, is held in high regard, and is recognized for its value.



Marina Rajan Joseph, TEW Coordinator

Prof. Marina Rajan Joseph, MD, TSTA (E), PFHEA (UK), is a public health physician turned educational transactional analyst. An active member of the ITAA since 2005, she writes in English and vernacular and has peer reviewed articles in the *TAJ* and medical education journals. As a TA educator, she envisions the expansion of people's consciousness, rooted in the principle of existential abundance. Marina's vision as the TEW coordinator is strengthening the robust training system of the IBOC through expanding the global community of TA trainers who take forward the values and philosophy of TA through training more trainers and practitioners.



Vinicius Sgarbe, Communications Committee Chair

Vinícius Sgarbe, CTA (O), from Brazil, is a journalist and a corporate communications consultant with skills and experience that will enrich the ITAA Communications Committee. For 2 decades, he has lived in the intersection between journalism, media projects, and cinema. His first job came through Michelle Thomé, who also introduced him to her father, Dr. Nilson Thomé, Brazil's foremost authority on the Contestado War. Through them he discovered the craft of telling stories. Years later, Michelle invited Vincent to a TA 101, which opened his path to study transactional analysis.



Since then, he has earned two master's degrees, in communication and philosophy, researching politics and psychoanalysis. Today he facilitates TA 101 courses, workshops, and individual analyses. He approaches his new role as ITAA Communications Committee chair with devotion, seeking to keep TA alive in the digital age.

Grace JM Lam, Regional Representative for Asia

Grace JM Lam, PTSTA (O), is the founder and director of SeraphCorp Institute, a leadership consulting firm in Singapore. She and her team use TA as the underpinning theory for their work with organizations and leaders in Singapore and Southeast Asia. Grace has a master's degree in leadership and is a trained and certified ICF coach. She is currently pursuing a doctorate researching the intersection between systems psychodynamics and TA with Keith Tudor as her supervisor. Grace and her sister Jr.-Earn Lam jointly founded the Southeast Asian Centre for TA. In her role as regional representative, Grace hopes to develop regional insight, connectivity, and inclusivity. Her understanding of the unique cultural, organizational, and development needs of this diverse region will enable her to represent its interest on the ITAA Board. She has a track record of innovation and growth and hopes to bring a strategic, forward-thinking perspective to her new role in the ITAA.



Reflections on WTAC 2025 in Montpellier

I have just returned from the World Transactional Analysis Conference in Montpellier, and I left with something great: connection. From the first day, I felt a deep connection with people from across the greater TA community: colleagues, teachers, friends, and strangers who quickly became companions in meaningful conversation. It reminded me of why I chose this profession: the power of human encounter.



Alva Ramírez Villatoro, ITAA Director at Large for N. America & Mexico, and Ever Gutierrez in Montpellier

One of the most moving moments for me was on the exam board for the candidates who sat the CTA oral exam. I could see in their eyes the courage, dedication, and countless hours of preparation it had taken to get there. I also had the privilege of witnessing the TSTA exam, an extraordinary demonstration of skill, presence, and relational depth. It was not just an assessment; it was an act of generosity, offering knowledge and vulnerability to a room full of peers.

The conference theme—"Legacy, Legitimacy, and Identity"—resonated deeply for me. Legacy made me reflect on the gifts we inherit from those who came before us in TA: the theories, the humanistic values, and the commitment to authentic relationships. Legitimacy reminded me that belonging in our professional community is not given once and for all; it is something we live into through our practice, our ethics, and our solidarity with one another. Identity asked me to think about the personal and cultural stories we bring into the room and how these shape our way of being with clients, colleagues, and ourselves.

What I take away from Montpellier is not just inspiration from workshops and keynotes but the quiet moments: sharing a coffee with someone I had just met, being welcomed into conversations in multiple languages, and feeling that my voice, shaped by my Latin American and Mexican heritage, belongs in this global dialogue.

This conference reminded me that my work as a transactional analyst is not only about theory or technique. It is about how we show up—with presence, curiosity, and kindness—and how we pass that forward. That, to me, is the living legacy of transactional analysis.

To everyone I met in Montpellier: thank you. You have enriched my sense of legitimacy, strengthened my professional identity, and left me with a renewed commitment to keeping the space between us open and alive with possibility. Thank you for a culture of mental well-being, connection, recognition, and shared legacy.

Ever Gutierrez, Guadalajara, Mexico

Advertising TA Services

by Alex van Oostveen



By working with psychological frameworks and techniques, TA practitioners offer services the impact of which differs significantly from that of traditional goods and services such as retail products, maintenance, or repairs. This difference extends to how such psychologically oriented services are professionally and ethically advertised.

The strategies and modes in which traditional goods and services are legally advertised have come to be accepted socially, although we may find some of these to be incompatible with TA philosophical and ethical principles.

The *IBOC Certification and Examinations Handbook*, Section 3 Ethics & Professional Practice, speaks to advertising of TA services under the heading "Basic Principles of Advertising." Most clauses are focused on clear, accurate representation of the practitioner's training and level of certification. One clause stipulates that practitioners should not make exaggerated claims about the impact of TA.

Do these clauses sufficiently account for TA's philosophical and ethical considerations? TA's philosophical presuppositions are that people are OK; thus each person has validity, importance, and equality of respect; everyone has the capacity to think (with few exceptions); everyone is entitled to receive appropriate strokes; and people decide their story and destiny and these decisions can be changed.

The ITAA Ethical Principles are respect, empowerment, protection, responsibility, and commitment in relationship. Practitioners consider how their decisions and actions affect various parties within their wider system. This includes clients (individuals, groups, and organizations), self as practitioner, trainees (including examinees and supervisees), colleagues, and the human and natural environment/community/client's wider system.

Mainstream advertising of traditional goods and services commonly uses strategies, processes, and nuanced psychological techniques to increase or even force the chances of a sale. How do we describe these practices using TA frameworks? Some typical examples of mainstream advertising: "Sign up now to avoid missing out." "Are you tired of being …?" "Led by one of the top minds in the field, this program will tell you exactly what you need to do to be successful." "Join the hundreds of smart people who've already experienced massive change." "Don't get left behind." "Join us in this safe space."

We might apply what we notice here in the testing and design of advertising our own TA services. Engaging in professional practice involves various incentives that can influence how practitioners advertise their services. These may be financial, psychological, or even philanthropic. Understanding and accounting for our incentives' influence on our advertising is consistent with TA ethical and professional obligations.

Advertisement influences a prospective client's expectations of the practitioner's and client's roles and the nature of the work on the psychological level. Ethical thinking and action therefore necessarily begin even before formally contracting with clients for TA services.

Some questions to consider in crafting advertisements:

- How are we considering the potential client's autonomy, OKness, and unique script?

- How does our advertising embody TA's philosophy and ethical principles?
- Is there any kind of nuanced or overt coercion or manipulation in our advertising strategies, processes, or techniques?
- Is the psychological mode of our advertising material, engagement, or strategy Parent to Child in nature?
- Are we positioning ourselves, our clients, or other parties in the system in drama triangle roles?
- What of our own script emerges in our advertising?
- How do we capture TA principles and philosophies when designing our advertising?
- How are we reflecting on and responding to what we notice in our advertising?

Alex van Oostveen is a member of the ITAA Ethics Committee and can be reached at alex@wordofmouthcoach.com .

the SCRIPT

Newsletter of the International Transactional Analysis Association
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Managing Editor: Robin Fryer
Desktop Publishing: lockwood design

Send all copy to: robinfryer@aol.com

Deadlines—15th of the month prior to the month of publication (e.g., 15 September for the October issue)

Publication of articles and advertising in *The Script* does not imply endorsement by the newsletter, the editors, or the ITAA.

The Script (ISSN 0164-7393) is published monthly by the International Transactional Analysis Association. For information on membership, visit www.itaaworld.com or contact the ITAA at the above address. © 2025 International Transactional Analysis Association, Inc.

Final Part of SEC Webinar Series Coming in October

The ITAA Social Engagement Committee had been running a webinar series titled "Avoidance & Engagement in a Disturbed World." The first two were on 23 January and 22 April 2024, and the third was on 6 May 2025. **The final part of this series will be on 21 October 2025.** In this 90-minute webinar, we will explore the community self: "Building Stronger TA Community Bonds to Hold Difficulties Together" presented by two inspiring speakers: Valerie Batts, TSTA-P, and Diane Salters, TSTA-P. Don't miss this opportunity to take part in meaningful conversations and share your insights on building unity and support in our communities. **Space is limited.** The webinar will be conducted in English, with Spanish translation available.

