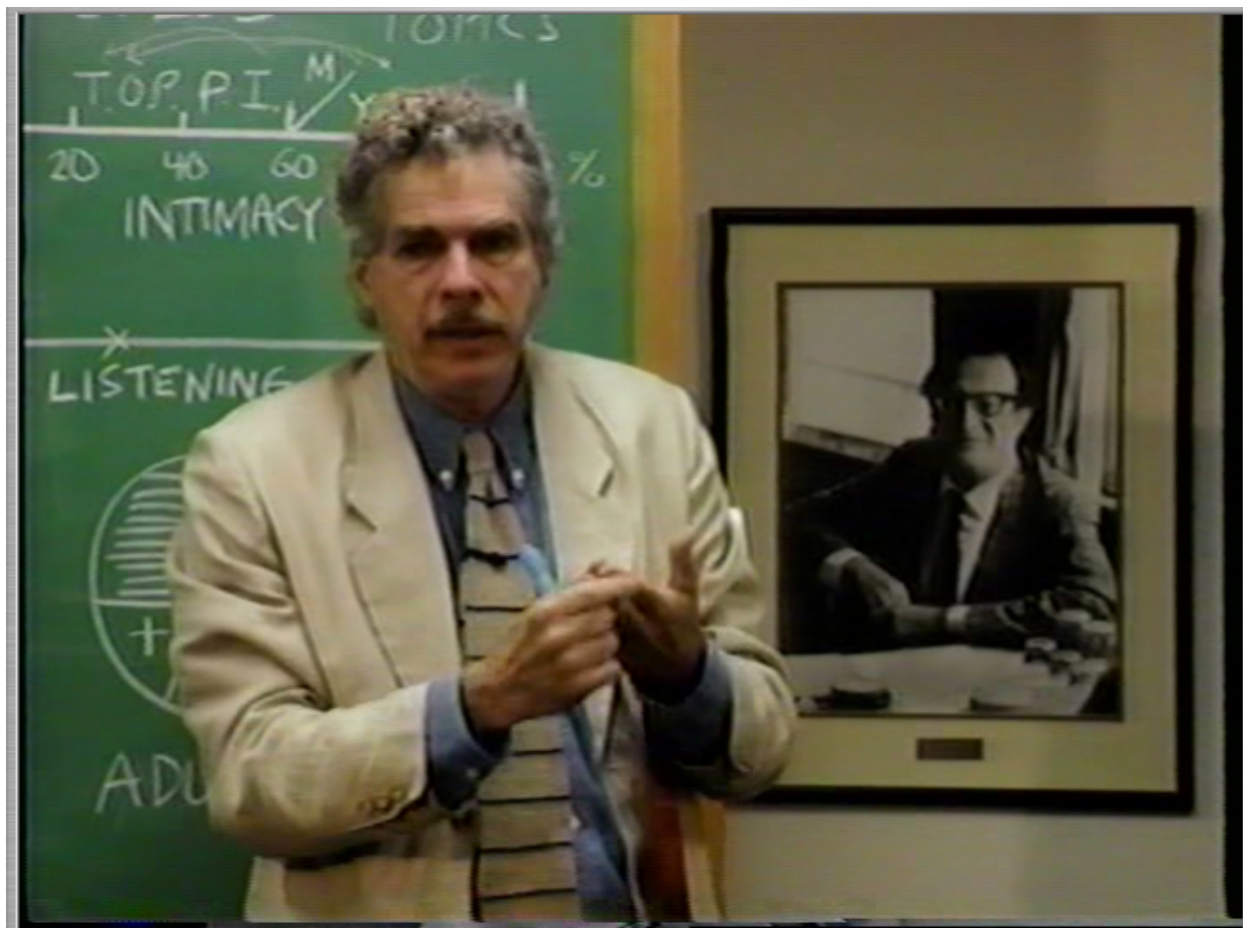ABSTRACT

Eric Berne's Brainstorming "202" Seminars And The World Peace Triangles
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ITAA Eric Berne Centenary Conference
Montreal, Canada, August 12, 2010

PART 1. THE "202"

THE "202" SEMINAR WAS A THINK TANK FOR BRAINSTORMING NEW THEORY. Whereas the TA 101 lectures were aimed at introducing transactional analysis concepts to a newly interested audience, the 202 seminar was strictly for advanced theory making by professionals meeting weekly at Eric Berne's home Tuesday nights in San Francisco. The purpose was to brainstorm new TA theory; time used was not spent on training purposes. Berne laid down his breakthrough new rules for theory making using acute observation and intuition to find the common denominators in human behavior, always put in simple layman's language and reduced to its core truths using Occam's Razor of Parsimony. After the meetings when it was turn for the Child to have fun, we all participated in "field trips" and "jumping up and down parties."

THE 1960s BACKDROP. All this new thinking occurred historically in synchronicity with the backdrop of the revolutionary 1960s in San Francisco where Berne's home was near the Haight-Ashbury district. To that new generations movement, Berne contributed enlightenment and permission by diagramming that the Parent was NOT the same as the

Adult; and that "The Child is the most important ego state with all the other ego states set up to protect it." His 1964 book "Games People Play" was a best seller for over two years and attracted thousands to a better way of understanding social relationships.

In that backdrop, Berne too was a revolutionary for those times, and he, too, was challenging the Critical Parent, but in a revolution against the entrenched establishment psychiatric Parent and the vague science of the old ways. He once declared "I could have spent the rest of my life disproving psychoanalysis, but I decided to invent transactional analysis instead." As a gifted leader, he empowered his followers with an "Us Against Them" pride, while chuckling "Out here in California were building a new Mercedes Benz but back East they are still driving a Model T Ford." He was a humorist, once referring to the DSM IV as "The Standardized List Of Putdowns." To the established treatment approaches, with his wry humor, he referred to them as "chicken soup" and "religion" and not true "science;" and favoring a "treat" over a "treatment." Stressing originality, when Dylan sang "The Times They Are A-Changing," Berne echoed with "Don't say anything that has ever been said before," and for a more scientific study of self and relationships, he said "Don't say anything that cannot be diagrammed." And in a direct challenge to the inbred psychoanalytic writing style, he said that TA writing should be for the people, the layman, and must be "understandable to an 8 year-old child, a mid-west farmer, and an M.I.T. professor."

ERIC BERNE was an objective scientist, a highly trained physician and psychiatrist who rebelled against the vague, experiential subjective world of the current psychoanalytic establishment and their complicated language. To their charges to him of "intellectualizing," he replied, "We respect our patients intelligence." They would say to him "Yours is oversimplified," and to that he retorted "Yours is overcomplicated." At his home he gathered a professional group including many doctors; Goulding, Harris, Everts, Karpman, Dusay, Steiner, Kupfer, and others, and welcomed all disciplines equally, to help set down a new game-changing set of strict standards of greater objectivity in psychiatric thought than had ever been known before. At the core of his theory was the observable social transaction, a transactional reality in objective facts that could be "photographed and tape recorded," as opposed to imaginary transferences and an invisible Super Ego, Ego, and Id that could not be "photographed and tape recorded." He had a high standard of rigorous objective thinking about what real people do in the real world, not in the protected subjective world of the analysts couch.

202 RULES. We were not allowed to chat. He would say "Hey, gang, we're in danger of having an interesting evening. Let's get some work done." We had to follow his much higher standard of thought than was ever known to the industry. No alcohol was allowed. No psychoanalytic words were allowed. I was once kicked out for a week for using the non-transactional word "dependency." Imagine today if he heard the phrase "engulfment and co-creativity in a transferential field" if they were not put into diagrams with the exact transactions quoted with vivid imagery!

202 RULE NUMBER ONE. The first rule was that the presenter had to write a legitimate question on the blackboard that would then be the theory problem for the audience to solve. This also removed any one-up, one-down superiority advantage for the speaker - the audience automatically had superior knowledge to the presenter. New theory, concretely hardened, had to be invented every week and soon written up to go into the next issue of the T.A.B. with himself as editor. Berne would frequently read from the books he was writing in his leadership role to inspire and demonstrate the creation of new theory. With superb leadership skills he also created an ITAA international organization with officers, levels of training, articles published, and conferences that are flourishing today in 60 countries across the globe.

"TA THEN AND NOW." To this theme of this 2010 Berne Centenary TAJ, and ITAA Conference, held in Berne's birthplace of Montreal, we can look forward historically from the

Then to the Now. Way back THEN, psychoanalysis was the Thesis, so Berne established TA as a new Antithesis in psychiatry. TA THEN was *our* new Thesis.

NOW in TA, we have a new Anti-thesis to that; a subjective experiential Relational TA. Our long-term goal, to avoid a split, could be a full Synthesis in TA, but to be TA, sounding like Berne, not Freud. A longer term goal could be for Berne's TA to take over the CBT field, and the Relational TA to take over the Analytic field.

THESIS, ANTITHESIS, SYNTHESIS. In the early days, the first Synthesis in TA occurred when the Goulding School, and also Cathexis schools, used regression therapy techniques to plumb deeper levels of the Child experientially, but then returning to Adult consciousness to make objective science of the original theory the method uncovered, with new insights, diagrams, and lists that were true to Berne's Occam's Razor standard. The Three R's of TA regression therapy for the "NOW" could be Redecision, Reparenting, and Relational.

PRESERVING BERNE'S SCIENTIFIC THEORY. Shortly after Berne's death in 1960, I suggested and got voted in, the establishment an Annual Eric Berne Memorial Scientific Award to preserve the continuing theory growth which was Berne's purpose of the 202. Eleven of the first fourteen EBMSA winners were directly trained in Berne's 202 using his strict scientific principles to hone down their theories. A year later I realized a need to have recorded the scientific principles Berne stressed in the 202 training and record them for history before they were forgotten. These principles I got published in the TAJ in January 1972, using the prevailing science and humor base of his TA, and it is attached below this paper as "The ABCs of Hooking The Reader's Child."
http://karpmandramatriangle.com/pdf/abc.pdf

PART 2. THE DRAMA TRIANGLES.

For the second of the three parts of this presentation. I will show how I used Berne's 202 seminar principles of scientific tenacity and Occam's Razor in developing the remaining unexplored variations of the drama triangle. These were presented in 2007 at the ITAA conference in San Francisco and recorded on my website.
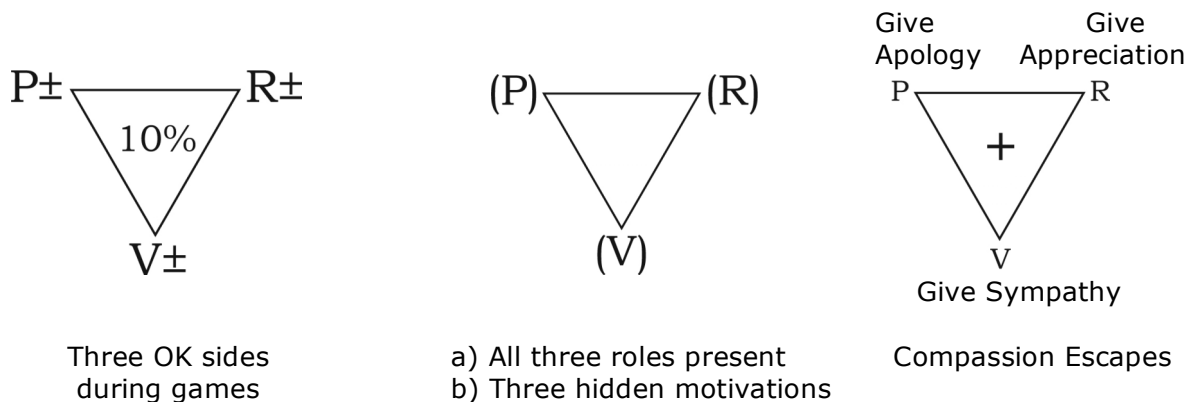http://karpmandramatriangle.com/pdf/thenewdramatriangles.pdf

THE COMPASSION TRIANGLE. From the onset I developed the positive uses of the energies of the triangle and called it the Compassion Triangle, where
(1) One recognizes that there is at least 10% of minor forgivable reasons for taking each gamey position in the
(2) One realizes that everyone, self included, is actually playing all three roles at once, overtly or covertly, in or out of awareness. I draw those hidden roles with the letters in parenthesis (diagram below).
(3) Then at the deeper level of social games there are three hidden motivations going on at once - unknown, undeclared, or manipulated, also represented in parenthesis. These could be the ulterior setups to get to the Payoff in game theory (diagram below).
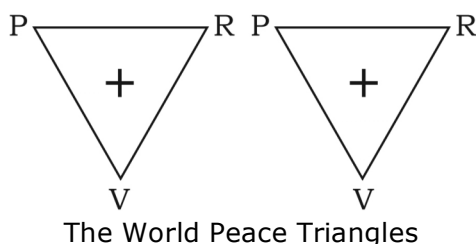
JUST GET OUT OF THE GAME AND MOVE ON! Most people just want to get out of the game and not know the *whys* involved. These Compassion Triangles gives someone additional *perspective* to the game, a way of *diffusing* it, and a way to *remove* oneself from the game. "Transactional Options" can also be used to get out, among other ways. This will be discussed later as we put two compassion triangles together to move from the principles of Family Peace to World Peace. With time for the audience discussion, other TA models will be discussed by the many TA people who are working on the problem of World Peace in their own way, in the spirit of the classic "Hundredth Monkey" story.

THE COMPASSION TRIANGLES. To save time writing notes at the lecture, here I print three variations of the Compassion Triangle that will be used later in the World Peace Triangles. The following will be present in each game player; self and other:

The Compassion Triangles for your notes:

P±⎯⎯⎯R±   (P)⎯⎯⎯(R)   Give   Give
  \ 10% /   \   /   Apology   Appreciation
   \   /   \   /   P⎯⎯⎯R
    V±   (V)   \ + /
                                  \   /
                                   V
                              Give Sympathy

Three OK sides   a) All three roles present   Compassion Escapes
during games   b) Three hidden motivations

WORLD PEACE TRIANGLES. Now, placing two Compassion Triangles together, we can get a glimpse at what can be called The World Peace Triangles. Illustrated here, when both Self and Other look deeper into themselves and their adversary, with the increased flexibility and compassion, there is some hope, with understanding, of moving beyond the stuck place of self-interest, hidden agendas and biases.

P⎯⎯⎯R P⎯⎯⎯R
 \ + /   \ + /
 \   /   \   /
   V   V

The World Peace Triangles

IN-SIGHT TRIANGLES
Usually people want to use knowledge of the triangle to just get out of the game quickly and move on, with no interest in understanding the *whys.* But to explore an individual further while a game is playing, there is inside them, positive and negative unrecognized feelings, roles, and games that can be entered into one's *intra*personal drama triangle, shown in the first diagram below. The conversations within themselves are a monologue.
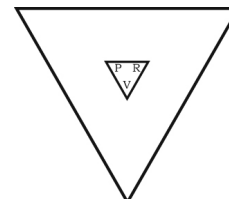
The two diagrams on the right below are Script Drama Triangles where, if motivated and allowed, we can look deeper to understand the origins of the games in childhood that provide the blueprints for later games, giving additional compassion. These family script triangles can be redrawn as a Redecision Triangle or a Transference Triangle. For The Redecision Triangle, the social level outer triangle both show the roles in the family games, and also show the three motivations of why the child accepts the injunction. In the most inner triangle at the far right is the three steps to making the decision and redecision; for example, the Victim corner is how did the child feel at the Script scene, then the Rescue corner is how did they interpret the world as a protective defense, and finally the Persecutor corner has the 13 limiting "Don't" injunctions/decisions.
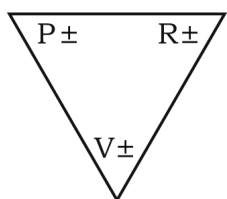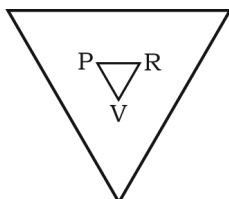
The personal Self +/-   The Family Games   The Childhood Experience

DARWINIAN PROOF OF THE PREVAILING THREE ROLE THEORY.
Using the principles of the 202 of scientific persistence and Occam's Razor to find core universal common denominators, we move deeper inside the family triangles to another triangle within the triangle, to a level of autonomic bio-dynamics. In the large combined diagram below, I show the _biological_ level of a three part dynamic relationship between the cells. For instance in seratonin exchange, R=fluid Resupply, V=fluid Reception, and P=fluid Restriction (SSRI medication) making for a healthy homeostatic dynamic. For the _DNA_ level, there is the DNA that improves the species, (R); DNA that dooms the species, (P); and DNA that remains the same, (V).

DIALOGUES. Because we are talking about transactions between cells, there is an intercellular dialogue dynamic I call the Biologue. Then, with the naming of transactions starting at the outside of the triangle, the first Social Level drama triangle transactions can be referred to as the game _Dialogue_; one's intrapersonal transactions in the Psychological Level are the _Monologue,_ and in the origins at the family level they are the _Familogue._ In the diagram below, the cellular level transactions, including the DNA struggle for superiority, are called the _Biologue._

The Darwinian survival level is the Archaeologue. At that level for survival of the offspring and their next generation, the parent must do all three drama corners instantly and instinctively in response to a family threat - in a survival choice between _instinct_ or _extinction_. The instincts will be to Rescue and protect; and as Victim to feel the fear of the personal and family threat; and as Persecutor there must be an instinctual counterattack capability to drive away the threat, or for flight. All of these are mobilized at once, as a new three-part adrenaline reaction, beyond just fight or flight.

The Darwinian survival triangle is the theoretical basis for the Compassion Triangle's position that in human drama, all three roles are triggered into action at once to some degree, overt or covert, and needing to be understood and processed to achieve relationship peace.

DNA and
Cellular
BIOLOGUE

Darwinian
Survival
ARCHEOLOGUE
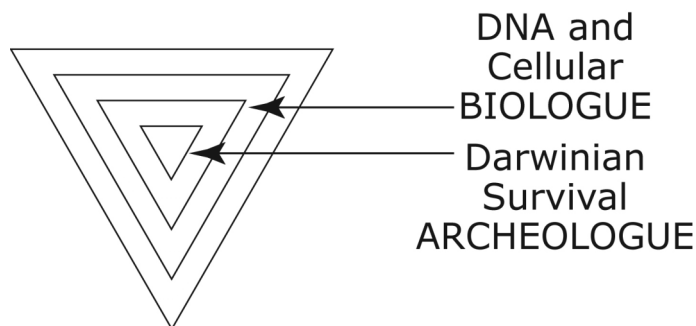
PART 3. TA THESIS, ANTI-THESIS, AND SYNTHESIS.

At times the many different "schools" of TA were likened to the Tower of Babel; or a "speaking in tongues" with the incompatible languages of Berne and Freud. In certain places, "Then and Now" they may still be covertly competitive. But using the reductive Occam's Razor, for simplification, there may be only two "schools" – the thesis and the antithesis, searching for the synthesis.

I refer to two excellent articles in the *January 2008 TAJ*. First I look in the 2007 EBMA acceptance speech on TA Relational Therapy by Hargaden and Sills, where on page 10 they say "the relational perspective is a type of feminizing of the theory." Further on they say "and challenged the idealization of the masculine ideals of objective science."

 So, do we have a feminine and a masculine orientation in TA? Trimming down that division using Occam's Razor, perhaps borrowing from the Jungian split of Matros and Patros, do we have, generally speaking - and open to discussion - two basic "schools" or approaches in TA, as a Thesis and an Antithesis? Consider two approaches:

1. SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC TA. Left Brain. Masculine. Objective. Facts. American. Berne. New cognitive-behavioral clarifications of people and relationships.

2. REFLECTIVE EXPERIENTIAL TA. Right Brain. Feminine. Subjective. Feelings. European. Freud. New relational office treatments of shared empathy with clients.

Perhaps for the World Peace in this discussion, there too is a thesis and the antithesis, searching for the synthesis, and the same healing properties of deep insight compassion with self and other can apply. A sensitive attention of the principles of co-creativity below also apply to self and other.

CO-CREATIVITY. The second article in that January 2008 TAJ is the excellent 2007 keynote speech by Adrienne Lee clarifying the Co-Creative process, where she uses the diagram below to illustrate and pinpoint that there are "four different places where the attachment can be actualized or breakdown." This diagram can be used alongside the World Peace Triangles to plan the places where communication can be improved or breakdown.
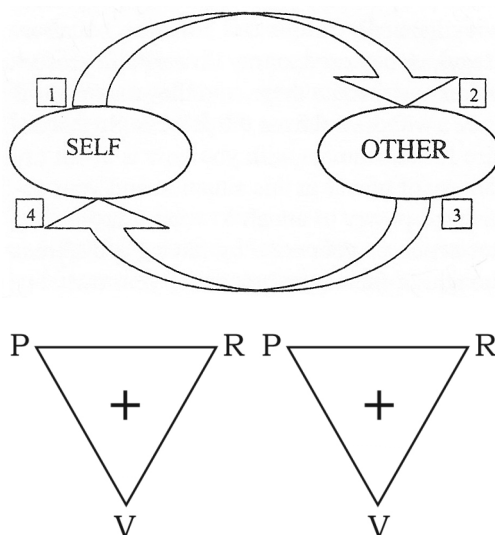
In summary, returning to the scientific 202, here is my 1972 TAJ (2.1 Jan 1972 p 8 – 12) article of my saved memories of the principles Berne taught, with some humor and creativity added. It has been reformatted for this paper:

THE ABC'S OF HOOKING THE READER'S CHILD

STEPHEN B. KARPMAN, M.D.

ABC's are elementary and for beginners. However, after having reviewed articles with the Editorial Board for the past year, I realized a need for collecting some of the basic principles of TA that authors and new members could use as a reference.

A IS FOR ACTIVE VERBS. Active verbs hook our Child because children like action. The passive voice is wishy-washy and sets up the con that things "happen" to people from out of the blue. An excellent reference which contrasts the active and passive viewpoint is Paul McCormick's "Translating 'Delinquency' Language into TA" (TAB 4:16, 1965).

B IS FOR BREVITY. Berne recommended that the first page of every article be discarded. An article shouldn't be longer than the idea needs to be said. An idea can even be stated in one line, such as "$E=mc^2$", proving that as the energy of the idea increases, the mass of the article decreases.

C IS FOR COWBOY. "Cowboy" is an old TA term for the therapist that gets right in there and gets the job done, and thereby doesn't have to sit around later and think up excuses why he didn't get the job done. The Child likes to read about the cowboy therapists who cure all their patients on Monday so they can have the rest of the week off for fun. Cowboy writers take the ABC's and "put it all together" right away and not "save it for a rainy day."

D IS FOR DISCOVERY. D is for the discovery of an uncharted field, not for another detail in last year's yield.

E IS FOR EASY. E is for easy reading. An article is easy reading if an eight-year-old can understand it. It is easy reading if it has the plain, logical sequence of a child's reader. A child's reader has simple words, simple sentences, and simple paragraphs. When an "Electron Microscope" player gets off his stool once a year and offers up a compact (or loose) article full of obsessive dissections, non-illustrated abstractions, and second order symbols such as P_2, PC, C_1, etc., it is anything but easy. An article is easy reading if it's gone through the seven drafts that Berne recommended. It is easy reading when it simplifies TA instead of complicating it.

F IS FOR FUN. Children like fun and can tell when the author had fun writing his thing. "Late Paper" players writing from the Adapted Child (homework assignments) haven't discovered that writing with the Free Child can be a fun hobby. Fun can be any number of things, a colorful word, a surprise image, a witty insight, a new angle, uncanny accuracy, a breakthrough triumph over mystification, or descriptions of the fun in the games people play. TA therapists traditionally include fun time for the Child.

C IS FOR GOODIES. Children look for candies and goodies, and don't like reading through an entire article and coming up with an empty stomach. Spinach, liver, and castor oil is for the Parent; meat and potatoes is for the Adult. A writer like Berne puts in a goody for the Child in every sentence. Articles that taste like recycled psychoanalysis cause a gut-level reaction in the subscriber who digs TA.

H IS FOR HANDLES. Berne talked of putting a handle on transactional ideas, something tangible to help people get a grip on reality. If you insert an idea into a scaffolding like the transactional diagram or the time structuring chart, then you have "hardware." This solidifies external social reality. When a TA idea is thought through, it is an object to hold onto; a catchy vocabulary word where previously there was only vagueness in a relationship.

I IS FOR IMAGERY. Children like pictures. A TA stimulus creates pictures of people for the Child living in his skull. These conflict with and replace the Adapted Child fantasies. Parent and Adult writing is mostly made up of words without imagery. The Child sees more pictures of people when reading that a game player "abruptly left the room" than when someone "left the room."

J IS FOR JUMPIN' UP AND DOWN. When the Child really gets turned on, he's giggling with joy, and after that, with more turn on, he starts jumping up and down. A TA party isn't considered successful unless people get so happy they start jumping up and down. Any mirth or merriment for the Child up to and including jumping up and down is O.K. for TA writing.

K IS FOR KNOWLEDGE. Children like to think and to learn and to figure out puzzles and to predict. Oppressive psychiatric systems that employ the term "intellectualize" deprive the Child of much that he can learn. When Adult information simultaneously hooks the Child we have "insight": TA hooks the Child with child's words; Gestalt hooks the Child with child's play; Psychoanalysis hooks the Child with child's memories. Children like real life information. The Little Professor is suspicious of high-sounding theories and wonders where the convincing proof, the specifics, and the facts are. Vague generalizations are a turnoff and seem to be a lot of bull.

L IS FOR LOVE. L is for the love of little children . . . - and the ABC's of what they like. Love is not

the exclusive realm of the Nurturing Parent, with maudlin reminiscing of "I Remember Vienna" or "My Favorite Patient" which often ooze from the pages like melted marshmallows. Love is meeting the Child's needs. Love is never having to bow to the ancestors in the opening paragraph.

M IS FOR MARTIAN. Berne would ask "How would you explain this to a man from Mars?" and "How would this look to a man from Mars?" "Martian" is a language so simple that a child (or a man from Mars) would be able to grasp a concept the first time it was explained. Martian also refers to a naive obvious way of looking at something that has escaped everyone except a newcomer from Mars who sees it as it really is.

N IS FOR NEW. An idea is new when it's first heard. Some articles have a sense of freshness about them; others come across as tiresome, "derivative," and a chore to wade through. The Child is anticipating creativity and originality, or an innovative twist to an old idea; not yesterday's news. Vi Callaghan once surmised that Berne wrote from the injunction "Don't say anything that has ever been said before."

O IS FOR OCCAM'S RAZOR. The roots of TA go back to the 14th century philosopher William of Occam. With Occam's Razor one cuts away at all the non-essentials until only the evident essentials are left, usually a single one. A game is reduced to a single key quote which economically tells the entire story. An ambivalent patient is asked to single his thinking down to "What is the question of your life?" An author is asked to focus sharply on "What is the point of your article?" In order to avoid "an interesting evening" the presenter at the TA seminar is asked to ask one question; the audience is directed to give only the best answer they can think of and not the lesser ones. A patient collects one color stamp, the game has one antithesis, the script has one witch message. The goal of TA is curing patients in one session (with one statement).

P IS FOR PEOPLE. TA is all about people, not theories and diagrams. Spontaneous new ideas in TA come from new observations about people, not new observations about diagrams. When an article is too theoretical and diagrammatic, the Child wonders "Where did all the people go?" The colorful description of the action in a game is more revealing than the theoretical breakdown of its dynamics. Original theoretical articles about infancy, childhood, and new script matrixes should mention the people and actual cases that they were derived from. The opposite extreme is an article, only about people, lacking in original scientific merit. "Games People Play" talked about what people do, and identified scientifically the fun the Child was up to while they were doing it.

Q IS FOR QUOTES. Berne defined reality as that which can be photographed and tape-recorded. In writing about reality, imagery can substitute for the photographs and quotes can substitute for the tape recorder. Therefore, the most real way to write about what's going on is to find a quote that contains an image, as in the game "I'm Only Trying To Help You," the sweatshirt "Nobody Knows The Trouble I've Seen" and the Witch Message "Don't be in a hurry to grow up." Clear examples make an observation come to life, but the quote makes it talk.

R IS FOR RECOGNIZABLE. A really crisp idea is so instantly recognizable that it needs no further elaboration. The Child should be able to picture the characters, situations, cons, and possible switches just by hearing the name of the game; e.g., "Drunk and Proud" and "Now I've Got You, You Son of a Bitch." Many new games are submitted to this journal with a forgettable, useless name but brilliantly worked out dynamics. Titles should be fun, not functional. The name Rapo is more fun than if it had been named functionally by the roles "The Seductress and The Wolf." "Rapo" sounds like a child's game, like "Spud" and "Hah Hah, Hermann." If the name doesn't make you laugh, then it didn't hook the Child.

S IS FOR SAFE. S is for the "safety factor" in TA treatment. The reader's Child can identify freely with lively descriptions of people without fear of a sudden introduction of a "Blemish" game to make him feel Not O.K. Ominous terms from the Standard Nomenclature's "List of Putdowns" are carefully avoided, in favor of seeing everyone as O.K. The absence of the Parental disease model (I'm O.K., You're Not O.K.) is a help. The focus on social reality and Adult problem solving prevents regression.

T IS FOR TREATMENT. The Child is turned on by the hope, inspiration, and permission in TA writing; to clearly see the way to start being O.K. again and getting a new script on the road. This spirit of renewal introduced by Berne has been presented in an exciting way in Harris' *I'm O.K.-You're O.K.* and James and Jongeward's *Born to Win*.

U IS FOR USEFUL. Useful means something useful to the patient, like Parent, Adult, and Child; something that works, that he likes, can remember, and put to use right away to get his Adult in control. Handy Household Hints ("if you're nervous, count to ten") and gimmicks are less useful in that there is too much appeal to the Adapted Child and less or none to the Natural Child. An idea has "leverage" if its usefulness is increased to that of an antithesis or a contract. Levers make work easy for the Child. An article is useful if it tells the Cowboy how to get cures, not progress.

V IS FOR VIVID. Vivid refers to a love of language that is concise, clear, concrete, crisp, colorful, and colloquial; not fuzzy, vague, speculative, bland, generalized, and non-specific. Graphic reality hooks the Natural Child ego state so the person can see again with eidetic imagery as he did as a child. Vocabulary

derived from the psychoanalytic school is pro-regression, id-oriented, hypnosis-related, and Parentally polysyllabic.

W IS FOR WIDEN. TA widens the limits of the Child's world. When the tendency to understand the Child's present behavior is to look to the past, focus on the future payoff. When there is an over-focus on what the Child is doing, ask what the Adult and Parent are doing. When a person says that scripts end with death, stretch it to end when the will is read. Have it begin with the grandparents, not the parents. See if the Child's game is four-handed, instead of two-handed. When the limits are stated, ask what's on either side of the limits. Berne got the overview and perspective of an idea, asked of what series did it belong, and then added to either side.

X IS FOR EXCEPTION. The rebel Child thrills at being the defiant exception in the game of "Me Too," and resisting the "Corner" game of conformity to the prevailing power. Berne took on the "thinking is bad" and "therapy must be serious" convictions of the prevailing psychoanalytic power and developed TA. When therapists told patients "work out your problems, then get well," Berne told them "get well first, then work out your problems." The gutty Child will defy both the developing trends of Parental canon and dogma, or the intoxicating persuasion of the Child's "Me Too" game in any system, including TA. When Berne saw that the tallied vote was unanimous for something, he would promptly cast the lone vote against it, to prevent an unhealthy situation from developing. No system can "rest on its oars" to use Toynbee's term in *A Study* of *History.* An idea that will be appealing to the Child is one that's not overcomplete, so he can fill in some blanks himself, as in "Y" below.

Y IS FOR...

Z IS FOR ZZZZZ. This is the sound of the sleeping Child after having his needs discounted in an article, both in the writing style and the dearth of original ideas or angles. The Adult and Parent may be working on the article trying to derive some merit from it, but the Child is asleep while that is going on.