

# **Review to article No. 120 “The role concept of transactional analysis and other approaches to personality, encounter, and co creativity for all professional fields” from Bernd Schmid**

by Jörg Westphal

## **Valuation**

### Why is the article important?

The article shows how the model of Transactional Analysis (following TA) can be adopted in professional fields and organizations. It explains further how the perspectives of profession and organization can be used to develop conceptive models and to deal with co creative relationships, including a variety of levels and questions related to professional and organizational culture. The article is unique in the way it summarizes how the transactional analysis model was adopted to work into the organizational (mainly economical) world. It is a masterpiece on systemic transactional analysis concepts.

### What can you read in the article?

The article brings in a nutshell the key developments of Schmid's work and his developed concepts both from a TA as well as a systemic perspective. It starts with the TA principles he has kept and the additional perspectives he took into account, the explanation of his role model, shows the additional available concepts for TA and gives Schmid's views on intuition, empathy, humanity, and spirituality.

### Who would benefit from reading it?

The article is at first important for all that are interested or professionals in TA. Those may find it interesting to understand how the model of TA works well in an adopted way in a different environment (assuming that most that are interested in TA may have a more clinical, psychotherapeutic background).

Secondly it is perfect support for all professionals working in an international environment/company and who face some transfer problems to explain to their peers the TA/systemic perspectives and theories behind. At last it gives a perfect overview about the development of concepts at Schmid's institute and is a great starting point for orientation if people are uncertain what they should explore in more detail.

The sections about principles that are important for Schmid, the needs he driving his developments and his views on intuition, empathy, humanity and spirituality are a must read for professionals in charge of people and organizations.

### What is not to find in it?

No surprise, you do not find detailed information about the various concepts and only some of the major concepts that had been developed. The article explains how the TA and the systemic world came together but assumes that the reader has a basic understanding of both worlds.

### And after reading?

The article gave me a great understanding how the principles of TA have led Schmid to the development of his concepts. The comprehensive format of the article brings the key concepts and their connections in such a unique way that it is easy to follow and understand. For me it is a sample that sometimes "less is more" and that a simple article can gain more attention and impact than a book.

The sections about principles that are important for Schmid are a must read for professionals in charge of people and organizations. The element of basic principles seems to be often underestimated and it is worthwhile to use them as a checklist and reminder on which route we are.

Schmid's comments on empathy, humanity and spirituality guide to the "next level" of possible developments; i.e. how to transfer from concepts that work on an individual level and in an organizational environment into those that work in societies and in a global environment. This seems to need more than the understanding of "how to develop and model" - it seems to need an understanding of "evolution". This will be influenced by the latest neuroscientific concepts and it opens a broad field of future work.

## Summary

The article summarizes Bernd Schmid's keynote speech presented at the 2007 International Transactional Analysis Conference in San Francisco. Schmid got there the 2007 Eric Berne Memorial Award for his adaption of the transactional analysis concept of ego states. His role model integrates transactional analysis approaches with systemic ideas. It can be used as a personality model and a communication model. Schmid expands the ego state model, describing the individual as the portfolio of his/her roles played on the stages of his/her world. In five sections background information about these ideas are provided along with perspectives that are integrated in this role model. The sections are detailed below.

In the first section Schmid mentions some of the transactional analysis principles he uses in his work. He outlines the additional perspectives in the organizational fields and especially in the systemic field he integrated. This to keep up with developments in other professional associations and to find additional ways that can guide conceptual developments and professional identities.

In the second section Schmid lines out the role model of transactional analysis as an expansion of the ego state model as a personality and a communication model. He gives examples on personality and relationship of using it. The section includes subsections focusing on the

- Three-world personality model and role-ladder model
- Definition of role and example to illustrate
- Discussing personality
- Discussing communication; the role model and reality in relationships and an example to illustrate

Under the heading "More concepts available for transactional analysis" the third section gives a short overview of some of the other concepts for personality, encounter, and co creativity that have been developed at Schmid's institute over the years. These include

- Communication as cultural encounter
- Encounter levels of communication for establishing shared frames of reference
- The theatre metaphor of personality and co creative relationships
- Encounter in terms of the theatre metaphor

- Formula of competence and matching between individuals and organizations
- Dialogue on responsibility in organizations
- Dimensions of whom or what meets in the dialogue
- The dialogue model of communication

In the fourth section Schmid gives remarks on intuition. He discusses expansions on Berne's concept of intuition, including intuition of the possible and lines out where limitations to intuition could be and how these play together.

Finally Schmid makes some remarks on empathy, humanity and spirituality. As he sometimes encounters sympathetic but romantic worldviews around these terms he wanted to offer some more prosaic remarks on these topics, not to put these ethical dimensions down, but to ground them deeper in terms of facing the complex problems of today's society. He then outlined his views on empathy as learning for individuals to tune into others' actual ways of experiencing and acting. Then he pays attention to humanity where he described the challenges for a global humanity that - differently to a tribal humanity - does not come from empathy, emotional bonding and co creativity alone. At the end of the article Schmid explains under the title co creativity and spirituality why co creativity for him is spiritual.