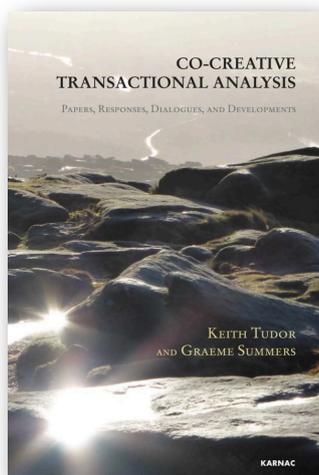


BOOK REVIEW



Co-creative Transactional Analysis: papers, responses, dialogues and developments

Keith Tudor and Graeme Summers

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Let's set out my review stall straight away: if you're passionate about Transactional Analysis (TA), you will probably find this book interesting, thought-provoking and a thoroughly worthwhile read. I would recommend it to you. If, however, you only have a passing acquaintance with TA and base your integrative practice on other approaches, you're likely to struggle. This isn't an introductory text – it's not intended to be – and you will get the most from it if you have a reasonable grounding in TA concepts and use these in your current integrative practice.

The book takes the form of a dialogue between the two authors plus invited contributors. One of its strengths is the authors' ability to make the reader feel included in the discussions through their underlying assumption that you will have an opinion and be engaging with their conversation. This is quite a feat in a reflective and somewhat theoretical text, and brings the subject matter to life more vigorously than might otherwise be the case. As some of the book consists of previously published material, it's interesting to read the authors' rejoinders to each other following reflection on their work.

Co-creative TA (henceforth CCTA) can be broadly defined as the idea that dialogue between a therapist and their client co-creates, and co-recreates, the self for both parties. The authors briefly explore field theory and social constructivism as the roots of CCTA, and many of you may already be familiar with these concepts. Their application to CCTA is quite ground-breaking in that the TA practitioner would now acknowledge and work with 'we-ness' in Adult-Adult relating, shared responsibility for the process, and present-centredness. Quite integrative, in fact!

Highlights of the book for me were the briefly-mentioned idea that games and scripts can be healthy; the healing aspects of the therapeutic relationship with regards to support and challenge; supporting the client's 'here and now' development instead of focusing excessively on 'there and then'; some useful self-supervision questions around co-created reality, co-created personality (ego states), co-created identity (scripts) and co-created confirmations (games); refreshing use of new language to update existing concepts; and the concept of expanding the Adult and evolving definition of what it is to 'be in Adult'.

Whether you agree or disagree with specific parts of the book, if you are a TA enthusiast and TA forms part of your integrative practice, this text will get you thinking, testing your current thoughts against what you read and evolving your opinions. And that, I believe, is the authors' intention.

Esther Patrick