

Muriel James Award – Istanbul 2006

Acceptance Speech:

I can't begin to tell you what a surprise and great pleasure it was to be nominated for this award and what an honor it is to receive it.

It has given me the opportunity to look back at my involvement with Transactional Analysis over the past 40 years and to really appreciate all that I've been given and all the opportunities that I have had to give back.

I first learned TA from Eric Berne when I was in therapy with him beginning when I was 19. He was the one who showed me how to leave behind a destructive life script and, in his words, "to put a new show on the road." He told me to "plug in my Adult, use my Nurturing Parent to make sure things are safe, and let my Child out to have fun." And this advice has been, for the past 40 years, an excellent formula for living. Eric encouraged me to be a therapist and to be effective in my work.

Some others who influenced me greatly are Muriel James and Bob and Mary Goulding. I thank you, Muriel, for being such a wonderful role model, sounding board and giver of advice. I thank Bob and Mary for giving me the opportunity to train with them at Mt Madonna even though I was only 23 and did not yet have any of my degrees! Their teaching still forms the foundation of all my clinical work.

But just as meaningful as what I've received, is what I've been able to contribute. I have had so many opportunities to work, to give and to grow.

A few experiences really stand out to me. Two of those are the times I have guest edited the TAJ and had the opportunity to work so closely with Robin Fryer as our managing editor. I don't think I ever met anyone who shares her knowledge, and expertise with as much gentleness and commitment as Robin. Working with her and with the authors, mostly members from our organization, has been truly a delight.

My current job is, by far, the most personally rewarding of all my work with the organization. I am the "staff liaison" and I serve as the link between the President of ITAA and the staff. My role has changed over the years, from one of being called in to trouble-shoot when problems arose, to the present, when I am more involved in the operations and making sure the office is well staffed, with talented people, who all get along and work efficiently together. Seeing this happen, and having relationships with all these wonderful people, has been a tremendous experience. I thank Jim Allen and each President of ITAA who has called upon me to help in this capacity.

I know that each one of you is here because of how meaningful Transactional Analysis is to you. I encourage those of you who want more challenge, more personal growth and a greater sense of community to become involved in volunteering for the ITAA or your local TA organization. There are many things that still need to be done!

On a personal note...my son Jake is here at this conference with me. He has benefited from all that I've learned through Transactional Analysis and I have him to thank for my greatest joys. I am delighted to see him have a solid Adult ego state, a fair and giving Nurturing Parent ego state and to know when to let his Child out to play! Thank you, Jake, for coming all this way with me!

I hope I have succeeded in giving you a very brief glimpse into my experience with TA over the past 40 years and that you understand how important our theory and our organization is, and has been, to me. I thank you for nominating me for this award and for choosing me as this year's recipient.

Thank you very much.