



Authority, Leadership and Participation in Groups and Organizational Systems

A Three Day Group Relations Conference in the Tavistock Tradition
Teachers College, Columbia University
New York, NY
November 13–15, 2009

This experiential conference will provide opportunities to:

- *Learn about group processes through participating in groups that vary in size, structure and goals*
- *Observe aspects of group life that lead to greater vitality and goal achievement and those which lead to decline and inertia*
- *Learn how varied aspects of individual identity such as race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, age, ethnicity, nationality, educational level and culture are interpreted and used by groups with and without the conscious consent of the individuals involved*
- *Experiment with choosing familiar and unfamiliar roles in various group contexts in order to improve your awareness of the roles you and others take up intentionally and unintentionally within work organizations*

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- *Observe the pattern of group formation, internal workings, and relationships with other groups as these emerge in the context of the conference*
- *Apply what you have learned during and after the conference to increase your effectiveness as a leader and a follower within the authority structure of your workplace*

CONTEXT OF THE CONFERENCE

As never before, our organizations – whether those are multinational corporate, academic, government, military, religious or not-for-profit organizations – are being challenged to transform the ways they carry out tasks and conduct business. We live in a world that has become highly interconnected and interdependent, opening new opportunities while creating new dilemmas to be managed. Organizational leaders and managers are working with an increasingly diverse workforce, again offering new potential as well as new possibilities for misunderstanding and conflict. Our world faces seemingly intransigent religious, political, and military conflict while the current economic climate is unfavorable to many organizations, diminishing growth and raising questions about survival. And all of this is occurring in the midst of increasing skepticism about organizational integrity and ethics due to the widely reported abuses and failures of those in positions of authority and responsibility.

These trends and concerns have created a renewed interest in issues of authority, leadership and responsible followership in groups and organizations. This conference is designed to provide opportunities for us, individually and collectively, to examine our expectations and assumptions about authority and to study and reflect on how we participate in the exercise of that authority and leadership in our organizations and communities.

The primary task of the conference is to study the exercise of authority, leadership, followership and responsibility in the taking up of roles through the interpersonal, inter-group and institutional relations that develop within the conference as an organization in its context.

WHO IS THIS CONFERENCE FOR?

This conference is for leaders, managers, educators, researchers, consultants, military personnel, clergy, clinicians, administrators, service providers, professional and technical workers – to deepen their understanding of professional relationships in a variety of contexts. A subset of the conference membership will be composed of individuals currently enrolled in *Group Dynamics: A Systems Perspective (ORL 5362)* at Teachers College.

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A SYSTEMS LEARNING MODEL

As it unfolds, the group relations conference creates an experiential laboratory, a temporary institution that provides opportunities to study both the obvious and not-so-obvious dynamics of organizational life. By holding certain factors constant (the boundaries of time, place, task, role, context) participants can see other aspects of leadership emerge in the present experience. Thus, members become participant observers who can make meaning of the temporary organization they are co-creating with the staff. Consultants provide observations to promote awareness of emerging themes regarding leadership, authority, task, role, and boundary formation. This can lead to learning on several levels: visceral, intellectual, emotional, political, and even spiritual.

This model for learning about leadership, followership and group dynamics evolved from the work of pioneers of the Tavistock Institute for the Study of Human Relations in London in the 1950's. Their ideas for how to learn about leadership, as well as a considerable body of theory and application, have grown out of this tradition and have found positive reception in many parts of the world. In the United States, the primary sponsor of "Tavistock" or "group relations" work has been the A.K. Rice Institute for the Study of Social Systems (AKRI) and its Affiliates, of which the New York Center, sponsor of this conference, is one.

STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE

In order to provide appropriate learning opportunities, the conference is organized as a sequence of group and inter-group events. The structure and sequence of events are designed to provide opportunities to study the conscious and unconscious dynamics that emerge and contribute to our experiences in groups and organizations. Conference events include experiences in relatively small, face-to-face groups; experiences in a larger group with more of the qualities of a crowd; and experiences with group formation and inter-group interaction. There also are opportunities for review, reflection and discussion with other participants. The events begin and end promptly at the times designated.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Location: Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY

FRIDAY 11/13/09

Registration 9:30–9:55 a.m. (The location will be posted at the entrance of Main Hall.)
The conference opens promptly at 10:00 a.m. and ends for the day at 9:00 p.m.

SATURDAY 11/14/09

Conference events begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 9:15 p.m. Continental breakfast will be available from 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.

SUNDAY 11/15/09

Conference events begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 5:00 p.m. Continental breakfast will be available from 8:30 – 9:00 a.m. Following the conclusion of conference events, there will be an optional informal gathering for members and staff from 5:00 – 5:30 p.m.

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REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Fees: The conference fee is \$450, which includes a registration fee of \$50. Discounted fees are available to employees of non-profit and governmental agencies and to full-time students. In addition, discounts are available when three or more individuals from one work organization attend together. Please see the Registration Form for further details. (Individuals currently enrolled in ORL 5362 at Teachers College do not pay a fee; conference costs are included in the tuition and course fees.)

Registration Deadline: The Assistant Director of Administration must receive the Registration Form **no later than Wednesday, November 4, 2009**. The Registration Form must be accompanied by check, money order or credit card information for payment in full except in the case of enrolled Teachers College students, as noted above. Completed applications will be accepted in the order received until all spaces are filled. Should the conference be oversubscribed, a waiting list will be maintained.

***** Special Note for Students enrolled in ORL 5362 at Teachers College:** In order to be guaranteed membership in the conference, applications must be received **no later than Friday, October 9, 2009**. Thereafter, they will be accepted in the order received, as will other applications, until all spaces are filled.

Withdrawal Policy: Withdrawals after October 16, 2009 will not be refunded. The registration fee of \$50 will be withheld to cover administrative costs in the event of earlier withdrawals.

Caution Note Regarding Attendance: We recommend that if you are living through particular personal difficulties that you seriously consider postponing your attendance to another time. While experiential learning such as that available in this conference can be stimulating and enriching, it can occasionally be stressful as well. The conference is not designed as a substitute for personal psychotherapy. Further, Individuals who know in advance that they are unable to attend all sessions are discouraged from applying because the conference events are connected and together create the temporary institution.

Registration Procedures for All Applicants: Send the completed Conference Registration Form and fee to:

Avina Gupta, MA
Assistant Director of Administration
Group Relations Conference Box 22
525 West 120th Street
New York, NY 10027–6696

Further Information: Please contact Avina Gupta, MA, Assistant Director of Administration, at 212–678–3824 or fallconference2009@gmail.com

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CONFERENCE STAFF

Throughout the conference the roles staff members take are open for examination and reflection by participants and the staff themselves. It is the purpose of all staff members' roles, whether they are working in administrative or consulting roles, leadership or followership roles, to encourage and support participant awareness, analysis, reflection, and understanding of the emerging conference dynamics. The consulting staff's interpretations will focus on group-level phenomena rather than on individuals' behavior. For those who have not yet experienced this approach it may seem unusual at first.

Directorate:

Barbara B. Winderman, R.N., J.D., Director.+ Attorney, Houston, Texas; Past President and Fellow, AKRI; Past President, Texas Center for the Study of Groups and Organizations++.

Matthew H. Tye, Ph.D., Associate Director.*+ Vice-President, Ritchie | Tye Consulting; Adjunct Faculty, Social and Organizational Psychology, Teachers College, Columbia University; President, Pratt-Heins Foundation.

Avina Gupta, M.A., Assistant Director of Administration. Doctoral Candidate, Program in Social-Organizational Psychology, Teachers College, Columbia University; Owner and Personal Trainer, Frangipani Fitness.

Consultants:

Robert F. Baxter, MD+ Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Psychiatric Consultant, Bonita Springs, Florida. Fellow and Past President, AKRI.

Howard A. Friedman, Ph.D.*+ School Psychologist, City-As-School High School, NYC Dept. Education; Field Work Supervisor, Counseling Department, Teachers College, Columbia University; Vice President, New York Center for the Study of Groups, Organizations and Social Systems++.

Zachary Gabriel Green, Ph.D. father/writer; Executive Coach, The World Bank Group; Executive Director, Alexander Institute International, The Netherlands; Graduate Faculty, School of Leadership and Education Sciences, University of San Diego; Co-Founder, Group Relations International; Fellow, AKRI.

Betsy A. Hasegawa, Ed.D.+ Organizational Consultant, Constellations Consulting; Associate, Washington-Baltimore Center for the Study of Group Relations++.

Christina Horner, M.A.* Organizational Consultant; Adjunct Instructor, Department of Applied Psychology, Steinhardt School of Culture, Communication and Human Development, New York University; Adjunct Instructor, City University of New York, Brooklyn College; Group and Workshop Coordinator, Brooklyn College Personal Counseling Center; Consultant Candidate, AKRI Training and Certification Program.

Brenda K. Johnson, Ph.D.*+ Assistant Professor of Psychology at Cleveland State University.

Marie R. Johnson, MPS+ Educator and Trainer, Diversity Practitioner, Organizational Consultant.

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Mary B. McRae, Ed.D.*+ Associate Professor, Department of Applied Psychology, New York University Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development; Private Practice, Organizational Consultant.

Jaime J. Romo, Ed.D. + Organizational Consultant; Primordial Sound Meditation Instructor; Author, "Healing Hearts: A Workbook for Survivors, Thrivers, and Supporters."

Matthew H. Tye, Ph.D.*+

Janice K. Wagner, LICSW+ Psychotherapist, Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates and Private Practice, Boston, MA; Faculty Field Advisor, Boston University School of Social Work, Boston MA; Past-President, Center for the Study of Groups and Social Systems, Boston MA++.

Emily White, Ed.D.*+ Educational Consultant; Core Faculty, Leadership Preparation Institute, Bank Street College of Education.

Barbara B. Winderman, R.N., J.D. +

Associate Administrators:

Mitchell S. Davis Masters Candidate, Program in Social–Organizational Psychology, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Alexandra Rivera Masters Candidate, Program in Social–Organizational Psychology, Teachers College, Columbia University.

* Member, The New York Center for the Study of Groups, Organizations and Social Systems + Member, The A. K. Rice Institute for the Study of Social Systems
++ Affiliate, The A.K. Rice Institute for the Study of Social Systems

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

*Name: _____ **Race/Ethnicity: _____ **Religion: _____
**Age: _____ **Gender: _____ **Sexual Orientation: _____
*Title: [] Dr. [] Ms. [] Mrs. [] Mr. [] Other (please specify): _____
Mailing Address: _____ **Other identities _____ *Job Title: _____
City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____ *Organizational Affiliation: _____
Phone (H): _____ (W): _____ * information to be circulated to conference participants
Email: _____ Fax: _____ ** information to be used in forming small groups
Previous Group Relations Conference Experience: [] Yes [] No If yes, please list the date(s) and location(s) of conference(s):

Conference Fees:

[] \$450 conference fee
[] \$400 discounted fee for an employee of a governmental or non-profit agency (please specify): _____
[] \$400 discounted fee for an individual attending with 2-3 others from the same organization (please list others' names): _____
[] \$385 discounted fee for an individual attending with 4+ others from the same organization (please list others' names): _____
[] \$325 discounted fee for a full-time student (with copy of student ID)
[] No fee required - currently enrolled in ORL 5362 at Teachers College
[] My check/money order for \$_____, made payable to The New York Center for the Study of Groups, Organizations and Social Systems, is enclosed
[] Charge \$ _____ to:
VISA # _____ Exp. Date: _____
MasterCard# _____ Exp. Date: _____
Cardholder's Name: _____
Cardholder's Signature: _____

In the interest of heterogeneity of membership in small study groups, an effort is made to avoid placing close associates in the same group. Please list any individuals who are registering for this conference or who are on the staff with whom you believe you should not be placed:

Did anyone encourage you to attend the conference? [] Yes [] No If yes, who? _____

Please read and sign: I have read this conference brochure and hereby apply for membership. By signing this Registration Form, I signify that the information contained in this brochure constitutes a contract between the New York Center for the Study of Groups, Organizations and Social Systems and myself and that my application authorizes the organization to conduct the conference in the manner described.

Signature: _____ Date: _____