

öggö (Ed.)

"Here and Now" is the result of a joint process of international network partners in group dynamics. Despite all the differences in group dynamics practice around the globe, "here and now" as the essential working principle unites group dynamics all over the world. This book reflects the variety of different truths and values practicing group dynamics can have and it embraces the various calls and intentions to practice it.

Practitioners share their systemized experience, discuss new ideas and answers and raise questions concerning the future for practitioners of group dynamics. The contributions show how learning about oneself as a part of a self-learning system can be transferred into other systems and fields of work and life.

The book walks the reader through different cultures and learning approaches. Read it as a passionate social footprint.

Here & Now

Collected Writings on Group Dynamics



öggö

Österreichische Gesellschaft für
Gruppendynamik und Organisationsberatung

Austrian Association for
Group Dynamics and Organization Consulting



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Here and Now
Collected Writings on
Group Dynamics

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Editorial work by Andrea Schüller and Maria Spindler

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We dedicate this book to three pioneers of group dynamics, Traugott Lindner, Edith Seashore and Charly Seashore. They left us this year and presented us an inspiring heritage, exciting responsibilities and the spirit for world-wide cooperation.

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Creative relations.

Aspects of generative group dynamics

1. Introduction

Imagine: people of different origins coming together for a limited, defined time. Here and now they want to learn about group dynamics and themselves as part of a group. Some of them eagerly participate with clear and conscious intention, others come because of hearsay and some have been sent by their companies or their superiors. They will experience and learn jointly about themselves, about others and about developments in the process of becoming a group while being the co-creators of it all. This learning happens through action and reflection, it is presented, tested and confirmed in the here and now. It comprises personal, interpersonal and systemic levels within the group as well as space and relationship between group(s) and their external environment.

This perhaps is the least common denominator for countless group dynamics training sessions all over the globe. Yet there is a vital diversity in goals, attitudes, styles and forms in group dynamics practice worldwide, depending on the learning goals, deeper intentions, values, skills and states of ego development of the facilitators, and the resulting interplay with the participants.

To facilitate group dynamics today we call for opening, holding and providing space for human¹ creation. Paraphrasing Pajou (Schmidt 2011), this basically means "... creating a world to which the people involved want to belong in order to obtain the desired results". This space contains both the freedom and the structure to allow the group's uniqueness to unfold, making it possible to be a member AND to be free to be oneself. In process terms, providing this space involves allowing action and intentionally establishing participative reflection and introspection to gradually raise consciousness of how we create and influence these *desired* results and how we cause the undesired ones.

¹ Human creation: our values – serving life, sustaining human values, life and the world as our environment by being sustainable and sustained, transforming humanities.

Following this intention involves dealing with sense and presence, integrity, shared responsibility and values as structuring forces through which we may also grow as humans and acquire communicative and social skills. We consider these capacities essential for creating organized social collectives such as teams, organizations and trans-organizational entities in different contexts.² Dealing creatively and in a human way with the issues of the unknown future is a pressing issue in today's world, in which the collective risks of human behavior have peaked. We have at our disposal almost limitless manmade potential for self-destruction (or creation), and how we will use it remains an open question. However, collective risks require collective solutions.

This article is a contribution to the discourse and the practice regarding what is needed to open and cultivate space for that which can emerge in the context of a t-group. In this sense we address facilitators of t-groups. Its second aim is to raise awareness of how generative group dynamics learning can add useful skills and wisdom for other challenges in the beautiful and risky world outside the seminar room. With this topic we address managers, experts, leaders who deal with open social situations and business issues in an innovative, resource-related and meaningful way.³

We start by raising the question that implicitly guides every single t-group: What for? Under the magnifying glass of the macro level this question makes us recall the pioneering ideas of group dynamics, shape a vision for the present moment, and point out where we locate generative group dynamics on this map. Next we describe our concept of generative group dynamics and creative relations as a path to open, meaningful and differentiated unities. This places us in the middle of the discourse on integral leadership (Reams & Caspari 2012, Wilber 2000), ego development and leadership (Rooke & Torbert 2005), Schärmer's Theory U (Schärmer 2009), hypothesis-systemic flow research (Schmidt 2010/2011; Gilligan 2002/2013) and the neurosciences. The Mandala of Self from Gilligan's Generative Trance work was decisive in inspiring us to extend ideas and experiences we gathered in our work with groups.

2. Group dynamics today – what for?

In our professional association ÖCGO⁴, group dynamics is inextricably linked to organizational questions, societal developments, challenges and questions of our time. The self-concept and practice of group dynamics have always aimed to irritate, enhance or refine social trends, themes and developments.⁵ Learning to make oneself part of an evolving community which includes a trainer, happens through action and participative reflection on the subject and object of self-formation. This undertaking may be read historically and very briefly as rejection of authority and mechanical thinking⁶ in favor of a broader consciousness of systemic inter-dependency and multi-perspectivity, and hence as reality created by the observer⁷. At the same time, every age has its own "group dynamics", and the achievements are cleansed of what in the meantime has become recognized as accessory phenomena, which belong to a certain style and consciousness as opposed to the procedure as such. Systemic approaches⁸ helped reduce complexity

4 ÖCGO stands for Austrian Association of Group Dynamics and Organization Development.

5 Similar as our fellow institutions ISABS in India, the NTL in the USA, whose mission and self-concept is directed to societal development.

6 T-group learning in Europe over the last forty years was inspired by the evils of the Second World War: discovery and learning about the dynamics of power between "leaders" and "followers", and inspiring people to realize and reflect on their concepts of authority and perhaps to change their behavior.

7 For more detail see the article by B. Lesjak in this book, pp. 77–94.

8 There is not one but various systems theories and they grasp complexity in different ways. They describe different connections within and between different layers in systems and, like every theory, each of them has a blind spot. In our professional community, the theory of functional differentiation and social systems (Luhmann 1984) had a big impact on the discipline. In social theory, the theory of functional differentiation may have made the identity of actors in a complex society with countless options clearer ("We are an enterprise and therefore we only think about payments") but further problems arise as a consequence. The style of thinking became a way of acting: functional systems outsource "foreign" logics, and the resulting problems (e.g. the justification of ignoring health or ethics due to economic or political logic) come in through the back door. There has been a great deal of debate about this (see Baecker). This way of functionally differentiating complexity has become too narrow for concepts of the future and contemporary questions for humanity (crises of institutions: financial crisis, poverty, health, loss of meaning) and a new view has become necessary, one which makes us aware again of the elements which have been ignored. These developments are reflecting

2 This applies as well to societies on different stages of consciousness development and different cultures.

3 We thank Maria Spindler for her inspiring and insightful comments on this article.

and above all to illuminate, differentiate and ease the effective connections between person, role, system and environment through focusing on communication and functional logic within a societal subsystem. Functionality ("If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." – William Isaac Thomas) replaced morality, clarity about the demands of the role reduced emotional involvement, everything seemed to become simple – and it did, in some ways.

As Western European, female group dynamics trainers with international experience, we value the fruits of the expansion and also experience the limits that accompany a rational-functional logic of actor and action. These lie in the ascendancy of relativizing and rational thinking, which is not inherent in the theory but can be found in the "collective hardware" playing with it. As in some systemic traditions, for example, verbal communication is in the foreground because it is assumed that human constructs of reality are primarily influenced by language. Thereby the body, awareness of feelings and non-verbal communication are neglected and relegated to secondary status. They are likewise involved in the creation of our reality far more than thinking and verbal communication (Schmidt 2011, p. 27 ff). If this integration is not successful, this is evidenced in physical, mental and emotional symptoms that result in individual and collective problems or symptoms.⁹

It seems that the high times of functional-rational thinking correlate with the mental self-awareness, which is a collective state of consciousness that mankind has reached. In this respect, the accomplishments and the solid ground of mental self-awareness (Gebser 1986 ab, Wilber 1995) that we in our culture group have achieved in the last 2,500 years are the catalysts of diverse crises that we are currently experiencing. The shadow of the mental self-awareness lies in the excessive relativization of the detachment of being able to say "I", and pushes it too far. What is too far? From our point of view it is too far when the feeling and will to act for the whole in which we are embedded are lost. Motto: "The enemy is outside." Structurally and intuitively, this consciousness is reflected as fragmentation and over-differentiation. Scharmer describes the current paradigm shift as a change from the primacy of inter-subjectivity to the primacy of trans-subjectivity. Not the functionally acting actors, but the source of their actions is the crucial configuring power that stands in the forefront to create new worlds. In more

poetic, bio-physiologically based words: the step from functional logic to heart-felt commitment brings forth new worlds from the abundance of the empty space. The absence of consciousness of these connections is society's current blind spot¹⁰, manifested in the lack of room for encounter and perception in which actors can see and reach across the borders of institutions and sectors (Scharmer 2009, 112).¹¹

Change of quality requires the ability to build new connections within ourselves and with others which go straight to the heart – our own heart and the heart of things. To do so, the source and the focus of attention need to shift in order to envisage wholeness anew.

Besides working on the shadows and blind spots mentioned above, the world today offers a number of questions, challenges and great resources which require something different and additional (compared to the pioneer times of group dynamics in the 40ies). Some examples: What are the needs of a generation that grew up in homes with parents who were liberal, giving and ready to negotiate? The upper echelons are slowly becoming more androgynous and diverse, communication patterns are changing, procedures are becoming more transparent, the meaning of institutions is being questioned and challenged, and women are speaking up. At the same time new insights and experiences are available; some of these come into group dynamics from other fields (e.g. arts, media, physics, medicine, neuroscience, economics) while others are available differently than in the past

10 Acting from the blind spot obstructs the connection to deeper sources of creativity, which is known as "downloading" familiar habits of perception, thinking, feeling and action to build relationships, institutions upon them.

11 For the purpose of this article we briefly point to the background of these considerations which is Jan Gebser's work on structures of consciousness in cultural development of mankind (1986ab). Gebser's differentiations of these structures are archaic, magic, mythic, mental and integral. The mental level of consciousness, in his work the last perspectival level, is rooted in the old greece, Ilias, the myth of Pallas Athene, democracy etc. (1986b, 125 ff). The new consciousness then was the becoming of a directed, intentional, rational mind which then transcended the mythical course of imaginative, circular "image-like thinking" (p. 128). The mental structure contains a new ability to polarize, analyze, differentiate, to say "I" and "you", to discover friendship etc. Through integrating and transcending archaic, magic and mythic structures and forms of collectives the mental level of consciousness brought forward new, more complex forms of states, art, science etc. The big achievement of the mental structure is to transcend mythical bonds and to be able to make everything because in the mental structure there are no limits through thinking; until this consciousness comes to its peak crises through quantification.

back on academia and consulting, which is visible in the development of (systems) theories voicing these challenges (Baeker 2013; Wimmer, Königswieser, Simon 2013).

9 See also Kasenbacher 2013.

due to academic progress. At the same time, individuals today have deeper and wider experiences which only forty years ago were available to only a tiny fragment of the population (e.g. education, personal skills and mastery, cross-cultural knowledge).

Let us return to the contribution group dynamics can have in this context. T-groups can be a space to cultivate a collective sense of future and gain essential skills to create it together. Why? As their setup is usually transorganizational, they are relatively pure in relation to the direct expectation of benefits from one institution. Further, the unknown space of a developing group is a good opportunity to let go old forms of communication and interaction and practice new forms of building meaningful communities with the individual and the whole. In t-groups one can learn to feel safe and become flexible in acting out of creative emptiness through developing concept-aware consciousness (Gebser 1986b). As we pointed out, the quality of the location of our attention, which leads us to action, is decisive for the quality of the result (remember: fighting for peace is like fucking for virginity). Not what we do and in which personal or institutional constellation, but rather with what intention, from which inner coloration, sets the tone for the result. In a t-group setting you can raise awareness for the impact your inner world has on the outer world and the other way round. What does it mean to heed the voice of the heart, to refine perception, to act congruently – how does it feel, how do we connect and what effects do we obtain? How can we change rigid patterns and institutionalized ways of feeling, thinking and interacting? How do we bring forth our individual and collective potential and our dreams? Through the connectivity in a t-group, institutionalized thinking, feeling and acting can fuse and lead to creative forward motion that reaches past individual development.

Once again: Why are these competencies crucial? For navigating and leading in ill-structured situations where the goals *have to be found* and generative solutions are needed, that is, for creating innovations and new fields of business and life, in transformation processes, senseless work contexts and crisis-ridden institutions and within trans-institutional fields. T-groups serve as rehearsal stages for social innovation.

3. Aspects of generative group dynamics

As group dynamics is part of the world in change, change affects practice, too. Among the many other attempts to face these changes in their work, our contribution is Generative Group Dynamics.

By "Generative Group Dynamics" we mean a process emerging through the integration of learning on the group-as-a-system-level¹² and consciousness development. Generative group dynamics enhances a creative learning process in which the leader provides conditions for symmetric cooperation within total diversity, entrusts her- or his self to the unfamiliar space of the emerging group and draws on it for the inspiration for her interventions.¹³ The steady, intense and intentional movement between individual and collective in the uncertainty of the process results in the group's potential to become a living, differentiated unit which learns from itself. Creative relations are a path, a means and a concept through which generative unity is created. In other words, *creative relations are relations through that we find and develop the connection to the undivided source of life AND to our (common) intention. In creative relations we walk through the unknown and uncertain and come out differently as individuals and as a collective.*

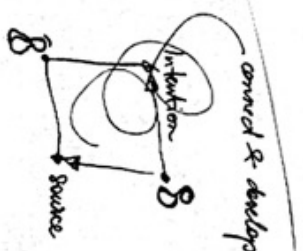


Fig. 1: Creative Relations

Many development models of groups incorporate concepts and descriptions of wholeness as something for which we consciously strive and also as something for which we unconsciously yearn: "the mature group", the "performing state", the "we-feeling", the "spirit", the "secret", the "group in flow", "collective enlightenment", etc. Wholeness is variously experienced, understood and created.¹⁴ Unity is central because it is the starting point, the un-

¹² Which in our view includes individual and interpersonal learning as described by Spindler & Wägenheim 2013.

¹³ From a wider perspective Krishnamurti's words come across our writing here as we are challenged to perceive and impart truth but do not possess or sell truth as facilitators: "Truth is a pathless land." Man cannot come to it through any organization, through any creed, through any dogma, priest or ritual, nor through any philosophical knowledge or psychological technique. He has to find it through the mirror of relationships, through the understanding of the contents of his own mind, through observation and not through intellectual analysis or introspective dissection. (Krishnamurti)

¹⁴ Physically, psychologically and emotionally, not only individually but also collectively; as well as archaically, magically, mentally, mythically or integrally, referring to the levels of consciousness.

differentiated source, from which the individual evolves, where it aims and through which the individual's resources become available to the group.¹⁵ Yet we have to differentiate, as the experience of wholeness depends on the level of consciousness and therefore determines the way it is achieved and influences the potential for action that comes with it.¹⁶ Gilligan (2012, 45 ff) distinguishes three levels and three states of consciousness in this regard:

- Primitive Level: wholeness without self-awareness
- Ego Level: self-awareness without wholeness
- Generative Level: self-awareness within differentiated wholeness

The three states – Gilligan calls it worlds of consciousness (2013, p.12 ff) – are¹⁷:

- the original mind of pure consciousness without content, empty, a life source ...
- the creative unconscious of the quantum world with it's infinite possibilities, the archetypes, the collective unconscious ...

15 Unity and wholeness reflect the process from primitive to generative level of „the one“ or „the all“. Whereas unity emphasizes the „one“ (with „two“ on the reverse side of the meaning), wholeness carries the traces of the many parts integrated in the „all“.

16 In Gilligan's concept of three levels parallels to Gebser's (and Wilber's) structures of consciousness can be seen in the way of a condensed version of Gebser's 5 levels. Archaic, magic and mythic structures refer to Gilligan's primitive level, the mental level corresponds to Gilligan's ego level and the generative level corresponds to the integral level in Gebser's terminology. Integral reality is the world's transparency, a perceiving of the world as truth: a multiple perceiving and imparting of truth of the world and of man and all that transpires both. The integral level of Gebser refers to the gradual transformation through awareness, concretization and integration of all the previous levels of consciousness (man) kind has been exploring: archaic, magic, mythic and mental into a new structure of consciousness. This consciousness is a perspectival and aware of mental constructs. See especially Wilber and Gebser. The latter speaks of the levels of awareness as transparent integral consciousness. We should not throw the baby out with the bathwater; mental achievements have justification but the tasks of our world obviously cannot be sufficiently fulfilled on this level.

17 Levels and states of consciousness point to different things: States refer to those aspects of consciousness that are temporal, passing, experiential, and phenomenal. Levels refer to a plateau of development a person or a collective has reached. In Sufi tradition the terms *maqam* and *hal* reflect this difference: *maqam* is a station of spiritual development, *hal* the temporal state of the soul on the journey. *Maqam* is like a step on a ladder, *hal* the movement – without guarantee to reach the next stair.

- the conscious mind of rational thinking, causal and rational thinking, yes or no, the managerial institution within our mind; conscious mind contributes intentions, filters, meanings ...

Within a group, differentiated wholeness involves dealing with relevant differences and integrating them into the continuous flow of life. To dive deeper into this happening we refer to the Mandala of Self that is a map for framing and guiding individual development. Gilligan refers to C.G. Jung, who used the Mandala frequently in his work as a powerful symbol for unity. The three dimensions in the Mandala of Self are:

- a systemic dimension of different, paradoxical, opposite ego parts, inner states (and layers) of behavior
- a vertical dimension that flows among different stages of (un)consciousness and
- a movement in time integrating past, present, and future life experiences

Through the mindful and creative exploration and interweaving of these dimensions core identity transformation is possible in the sense of re-creating oneself as a new self-aware differentiated wholeness. The Mandala of Self together with the concept of three levels and states of consciousness is inspiring, as it carries the idea of wholeness and reflects crucial dimensions of development we encounter in our work. According to the way we refer to groups, that is, social systems, we have modified the Mandala considering two aspects:

1. The systemic dimension as referred to by Gilligan consists of various inner ego-parts or layers of behavior that, together with their relations to one another, affect the entire individual in his environment. The corresponding parts in the group are the members and their communication originating from different inner states or behavioral layers in relation to each other, with reference to the evolving group in its environment.

2. Generative group dynamics points to a differentiated open wholeness. This unity is multi-dimensional and becomes accessible through the ability to hold and integrate multiple perspectives simultaneously. This correlates to the three principle axes in the Mandala, through which group dynamics learning is guided. The Mandala, however, is (only) two-dimensional. For our perception of differentiated whole-

ness, the term "Mandalon" seems more appropriate, a combination of "Mandala" and "Holon". A Mandalon is an open resonating body.¹⁸

Including these adaptations, the learning explorations flow through the following three main dimensions in the Mandalon of Generative Groups. Groups and their members on their learning journey can gain experience and develop when they:

- deal with differences within themselves and the group (diversity of members, inner states and different layers of behavior) and learn how to relate, connect and integrate these differences
- learn how to orient positively to their past, present, and future experiences in group life as a movement in time and
- establish a creative flow between their conscious and unconscious states of mind.

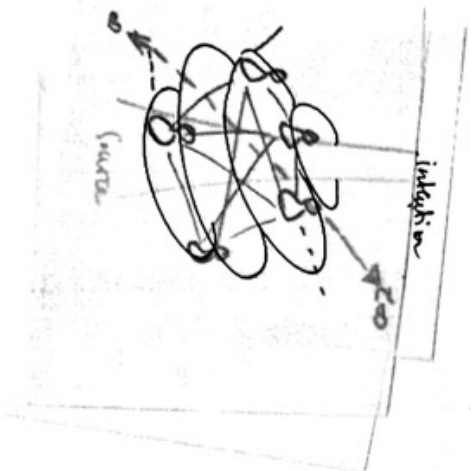


Fig. 2: The Mandalon of Generative Groups

Through the exploration of the interweaving of these levels, which are in interaction with each other, space is opened in which creative experiential learning can both specifically unfold and be directed with focus. This way the group can look further behind the scenes of creative communal learning, while being at the same time their creators. (Networks of) relations in which these experiences become meaningful through the risks of leaving the comfort zone are the journey and the destination.¹⁹

¹⁸ The special characteristic of a mandalon is the harmonic consolidation of the dynamic and fine energies in a symmetrical state of balance of the moment. In our concept a Mandalon is a resonating body. The term exists in architecture as well, for example in the design of cathedrals. www.mandalon.com

¹⁹ In this context David Bohm (1990) talks about "coherent micro-cultures". These are groups that are capable of holding many differences, so that the unfolding of

In the following chapter we will explore the three dimensions of the Mandalon of Generative Groups and describe our experiences with generative group dynamics and our ideas about it.

3.1. The systemic dimension

How do we connect with others?

For the purposes of this discussion we use "systemic" to describe that the participants create the group by constructing recurring series of experiences and communication²⁰ through the focus of their attention. Groups in the sense of "systems" which in and of themselves are meaningful and cooperative do not exist as established, pre-defined units. They develop through communication, which means the relation between elements. It is worthwhile to remain aware that there are all sorts of elements in a group, depending on the perspective, the (high) definition or resolution and the depth of focus of the participants' perceptions. Elements can be the members of the group, a subgroup, the whole group, a certain behavior of a member, a different behavior of the same person, an inner state, an emotion

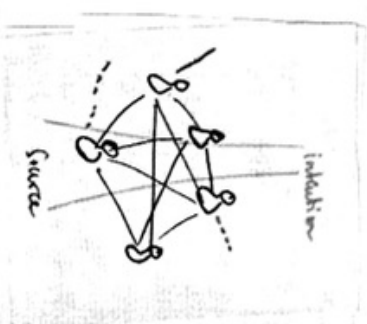


Fig. 3: Elements connecting

expressed by a member, an empty chair, the space between two members, a sigh by someone, a bodily sensation, the atmosphere, a piece of wood outdoors, a mosquito in the room, a movement, the color of skin, the tone of voice or the clothing of a member, etc. As a member or facilitator we can relate to all of this and much more, depending on what catches attention of our mind-body-soul.

Simultaneously we ourselves as perceiving members are many too. We are not established, fixed "individuals" but multilayered

the self is possible, supported and shaped by the power of a group. In Bohm's thinking, these micro-cultures can promote developments on the macro level.

²⁰ We understand "communication" in the sense of Kant, upon which system theory is based. Communication denotes the "in between", not the "thing" but the relation. Relation can concern everything that is connected with perception (your car, your glove, an action, a look, another person's expression, etc.) and enters the field of awareness.

and changing in what and how we perceive, feel, think and act, how we speak, look, smell and so on. We contain countless "elements", consciously or unconsciously, which are potentially interesting aspects others might (want to) connect with. This is the source of complexity.

For facilitating the process of weaving networks in generative groups along differences²¹ it is helpful to remind ourselves that:

- Differences come into play as participants bring in multilayered and changing "realities" of themselves depending on their inner state. These are *inner points of reference* that influence how they relate to themselves and others.
- Groups do not appear from out of nowhere but emerge through recurring series of perceptions and actions between participants. This can be experienced and observed as *patterns* or structures, which thus become "real". The *playground* is huge, as there are far more patterns than we can consciously perceive (Schmidt 2011). Through forming, preserving and changing patterns the individuals and the group develop. *Attention* is the major clue for influencing patterns (remember our introductory statement: "... creating a world to which the people involved want to belong in order to obtain the desired results.")
- The *shift of attention* to the "inner universes" of the members is a gateway to resources for individual and group development. By focusing on the inside, a wider spectrum of consciousness is accessed.

How do we re-create wholeness through integrating differences?

Differences surface, harmonize, collide and disappear; participants and the facilitator connect and disconnect, consciously and unconsciously, casually or intentionally, observed or neglected. After the connections are made, the next challenges arise: How are we connected and how do we deal with our "relations"? Are they creative, resourceful, inspiring, boring, challenging, fragile, strong, destructive?

Perceiving relations and their quality is a core part of the group's learning journey. The major job of the trainer is to cultivate a space and provide interventions through which diversity of members and of their different lay-

ers of behavior can emerge and come into play. Through working on and integrating these differences, tensions change on the mental, physical and emotional levels and in turn affect the relations and the field. When this happens exemplarily through a few members, the reality of the group changes, and afterwards new directions of movement and room for consciousness open, through which communication can take place. The bandwidth stretches from subtle atmospheric changes through verbal statements to physical changes, for example, in seating arrangements or in posture. This change in milieu retroacts on the creators, and the result are other networks and communication patterns that in the best case are desirable, more resource-rich and beneficial for the group. Or else the results are unfavorable connections, unwanted, even stubborn recurrences of patterns of action with the accompanying physical patterns of tension, both individual and collective, accompanying them.

To facilitate these processes it is crucial to integrate ego awareness skillfully with a direct connection to the integrated wholeness of the emerging group. This consciousness is embodied, open, positively intentioned, able to fluidly hold and engage multiple truths and positions and connected to creative emptiness. Here are some ways to bring it to the fore:

- *Hold and engage differences*: Establish multiple relations to different ego states or states of the group members and to different layers of behavior of others (including constellations and subsystems). We are many, and we change from moment to moment. Give access to the subtle or sometimes drastic changes in people and connect openly: e.g. "The silence in the group feels comforting now, whereas yesterday I felt more anxiety in the atmosphere", "You look relieved; this inspires me to repeat my question from yesterday", "Today I would like to talk to the cooperative version of you". Through your eyes you co-create a different reality and inspire different networking in order to enable group members to connect differently. Facilitators assist at the birth of differences. Where differences cannot or are not permitted to appear, there is less creative potential available; only simpler communities come into existence, and there is more room for violence, alienation or illusion.
- *Benevolent containment* refers to making space for whatever wants to emerge in relation to the intention of the whole. This requires an attitude from the facilitator that is free, clear and cleansed of cynicism, judgment and fear (Scharmer). Welcoming whatever arises does not mean allowing each action to continue, but it is a requirement to

²¹ See also Scala 2013.

make contact with the potential that is then. To connect humanly with a "destructive" action can make a lot of sense for the group. This leads to exploring the unknown or the unwanted between the members and they can go deeper into each person's intentions and motives and gradually add to collective meaning and sense. This containment does not appear from nowhere. Trainees are humans with a shadow (except those of us who are already enlightened), so trainees need to work towards good containment for themselves too: a holding environment in which your work is embedded so that you can trustfully speak from the heart, connect with your intention, deal with your shadows, doubts and fears. Vertical connection and supportive staff collaboration come into play here (see Chapter 4).

- *Related membership.* Neurobiological research shows that the development of our potential through a sustained, respectful atmosphere that is affirming of others is provided. The individuals' organisms and the social body react immediately and automatically to the style of the welcome. This ability is essential so that differences can be shown and kept. Goleman (2007) describes emotional bank accounts in relationships, which are in balance when the relationship between communities that is positive and supportive of bonding and that, which is negative and critical, is 5 to 1. Under these conditions, a great deal is possible, including the development of fearless, ordered people, who can express themselves and participate freely. Through this the connection with respect to what is one's own and what is others' comes into being and grows. Connection reduces aggression (Bauer 2005) and expands our options for action.

- *Refine perception through subtle awareness.* Looking at differences like assembly-line work blocks vision and contributes to serial productions of reality. Scharmer calls this "attentional violence". It happens when you lack awareness of subtle changes because the differences that matter are subtler than you expect. Why? Because you are looking for the differences that you are used to looking at in order to fit your concepts. What can you do? Become aware of this and use your whole range of perception, your bodily sensations as you connect with others or with the field. This applies not only to situations in which the group acts but also to those in which it reflects. Both processes are forms of focusing awareness and will have an impact, no matter whether it is intentional or spontaneous. Groups that have experienced and grasped learning through action and reflection will profit when reflection is also refined. Especially in tandem settings (one

group observing the other and sharing its observations) it is helpful, among other methods, to make feedback routines between the groups and their influence on what happens a central theme – as reflection is action – that will have an impact.

- *Creative emptiness:* Which mutual capabilities do we need to become more present, to explore the unknown space as a group and shape it meaningfully together? The task of the trainer is to preserve the open, uncertain space. How this is accomplished is not arbitrary (Hühner 2011, 25): judgmentally or observantly, questioning or interpretively, gently or brutally professionally administered or led by a weak presence? Which words are chosen; where is the source of the attention and where do we steer it? For this to succeed it is necessary that we make contact with the uncertain and draw inspiration from it for the interventions. Stillness is often the entrance fee to the creative flow of a group. To be able to grasp mutual stillness in various qualities and those qualities which are meaningful to the particular group is an important ingredient of generative group dynamics. Compare it to breathing: between inspiration and expiration there is a breathing space from which the impulse for the next inspiration comes, fed by our life stream in the vertical connection. The gradual disappearance of fear in and through the stillness also provides a position in which the masks fall layer by layer and uncertainties can be stripped away (Luft & Ingham 1955, Scharmer 2009).

Here we touch on a further dimension of the Mandala of Generative Groups: different levels and stages of consciousness. What comes into play when this spectrum is blended in is considered next.

3.2. The (un)consciousness dimension

How do we create reality? How do we explore the unknown creatively and resourcefully with the aim of creating a common ground to share meaning? How do different states of consciousness influence relations and networks of relations?

Exploring the unknown

Assume you start to paint. You take the canvas. It is usually empty and mostly WHITE. It comes in different sizes. If you look closer you will find structures on the

paper or the linen. You have an idea of what you want to paint or an impulse or a sensation that wants to be expressed. Maybe it is clear and your unconscious, pen or a brush or a paint on it. You ... Do you know such moments?

Figure 4:
The empty canvas

Groups can be canvasses (invisibly layered), especially in the beginning, when we start the journey into uncertainty. By this we mean what lies in the future, that is, everything that lies before us temporally, all the way to the next moment that is an aspect of time.

A group always works on the border between the moment of what was previously familiar and the scope for potential which lies ahead. This scope is described in many ways. Quadrant IV (Luft & Ingham)²² the collective unconscious (Jung), the quantum field, the unknown that lies between us (Buber), the uncreated future (Scharmer) – no matter what we call it, it matters that we call it something because the unknown, the uncertain and the unconscious provide energy for the group. In our perception, the focus of group dynamics work and writing was implicitly more on conscious communication processes of the conscious mind, while dealing with the unconscious field and its consequences for the work was rather casual.

²² In the Johari window, a classic heuristic tool that is anchored in our professional association (see team of authors), the unknown is made a central theme. Luft and Ingham describe two elementary axes of social learning and growth in a group: oneself and the other, the known and the unknown. The fields in this matrix are free activity, the blind spot, the private field (hidden) and the collective unknown. Linking the social dimension and a dimension of consciousness, the model shows quite simply how crucial the unknown is for interaction. We strive for free activity among the members and between the groups, also for successively letting go of the masks, the disclosure of what is concealed, and the reflection of the impressions one obtains of others. All of that is carried and influenced by the large reservoir of Quadrant IV, which contains the unknown as well as the unconscious. For Luft and Ingham, Quadrant IV is the area of unknown activity: "Neither the individual nor other people notice certain behaviors or motives. However, we can assume that they exist, because at the end some of these things come to light. Then it is recognized that these unknown behaviors and motives have already been influencing the relationship the whole time." (Luft & Ingham 1971, p. 23)

Also the interrelation of individual and group development was predominantly on the side of the group. For some, the growth in self-awareness was more a "collateral damage". It's the group that counts. Our thinking agrees rather with those who say that social, economic and political development starts from within (Wilber 2005). Differentiated wholeness is the outcome of a balanced interweaving on different systemic levels²³ and different levels and states of consciousness. Through the gathered experiences (sometimes over very long periods of time), individual and collective consciousness develops layer by layer, through which mankind can shape social forms on different levels of complexity (e.g. the development from a tribal form to organization or democracy). Therefore, becoming more experienced and skilled in using different states of consciousness to merge with other skills for action in business organizations, teams, institutions, etc. becomes crucial for resourceful work and for creating new forms of organized collectives and society. On the rehearsal level of t-groups the skillful use of different states of consciousness is necessary for the development of creative relationships to bring forth a creative social body. Here are some reasons:

Creativity: "In painting, your knowledge is mostly unconscious and the bottom line is to use the unconscious to establish scope. That at any rate is the idea that I more or less pursue. You can call it instinct. That's it." Alex Katz. To bring out the essential beauty of the live social body in the process of collectively painting a group involves unexpected outcomes, too. It is necessary to walk different paths that lead to different inner experiences, allowing things to develop. It is not a fully intentional and consciously doable process that asks us to let go of self-concepts and other ego-related concepts at a certain point. When goal-oriented consciousness content dominates, we ourselves stand in the way of an ecological-evolutionary development (Bateson). Every concept of what group dynamics should lead to or how people (including oneself) should act can be such a barrier to the creative flow.²⁴

²³ Individual, interpersonal and group levels – see also Spindler & Wägenheim 2013.

²⁴ We are not against concepts, but concept-aware. The conscious mind selects transformed pictures from the unconscious mind and presents them. By doing this it divides the area of becoming unconsciously aware into central (inner) and peripheral (outer) regions. When this pattern of conscious modeling (the partition) persists (i.e. when the same program is continually active) it can lead to dissociation between conscious and unconscious processes. As we will see, this causes symptoms that we understand as symbolic attempts to reunite the two orders of the mind (see

Performance: The capacity of the unconscious has been documented extensively. The collective human unconscious harbors an enormous fund of collective knowledge and wisdom of an uncreated future (Gilligan 2008). Current research on the human brain confirms scientifically with the help of imaging processes that we perceive 220,000 times more through our senses than we are aware of (D'Amicis, Höfer, Röckenhaus on ARTE 2011; Schmidt 2011). This perception requires that we include cooperation with the unknown and unintentional processes in the focus of our attention, as the energy goes into desired but also undesired and destructive forms of human interaction.²⁵

Cultivation: Social development develops the brain, and vice versa. The exploitation of the unknown space of the group does not happen in isolation but in relatedness. The varied experience is an inner process that works both outwardly and inwardly. The inner experience influences with whom, how and why we bond, consciously and unconsciously, randomly and automatically: "On a neural level all processes of perception and experience can be described as expressions of the activity of neural networks in which nerve cells bind themselves into patterns of cell unions through synapse connections. The description of the neural patterns can be seamlessly complemented through the description of patterns on the interactional level (patterns of interaction) and then on the level of subjective sensual experience (internal

Gilligan 2008, p. 43). These tensions, e.g. when dealing with initial irritations, can be steered into creative paths through these symptoms' energy, love and contact, for which e.g. media, serve as trigger to the body's awareness of the senses through the body.

- 25 "The nervous system in the heart (the heart-brain) enables the heart to learn independently of the cerebral cortex, to remember and to make decisions. Moreover, numerous experiments have demonstrated that the signals the heart ceaselessly sends to the brain significantly influence the higher brain functions which have to do with perception, cognition and the processing of emotions." (McCraty, Institute of Heart Math) Results of this research further show, that the electromagnetic field of the heart is 5,000 times larger than the brain's. These findings also revealed connections between heart rate and productivity of teams. In communities, communication beyond all factual content occurs through heart rates; and as the researchers point out, this is mostly this is unconscious. This corresponds with the quotation from Bill O'Brian mentioned earlier: "... the quality of the source determines the intervention." (Scharmer 2009)

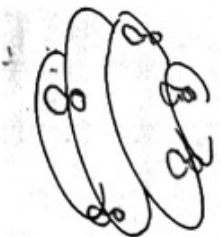


Fig. 5: elements in different states (and levels) of consciousness

we also cultivate our social world. To sustain and integrate a variety of cultural process within ourselves is the starting point from which we can begin to create richer external cultures.

3.3 Past, present and future in group life

Lenny (Krautitz 1991) to Dorothy (Sayers 1933): "It ain't over till it's over." Dorothy: "Could you not begin at the beginning?"

Where and when does a group begin, and where and when does it end? When does a development begin, when does it reach its peak? When did the trigger for a conflict first appear and how did it go on? The various faces of a group change from cautious to irritating experiences, from pride and joy at recognizing and sensing the first feeling of "we" to painful losses of members, perceptions, chances, and then to their handling. Other scenes present the group as the integration of members which is finally achieved after many attempts; as the experience of limits and their acceptance; and as various stages of successful, painful, uplifting integration of inner conflicts; as the experience and integration of emotional outbursts and much more.

Group development also has a temporal dimension. Integrating a group's movement in time is in no way a linear process in which "experiences are added up" through technical time measurement, but rather a creative (or destructive) effort that we have to facilitate. The integration of the various episodes in their temporal sequence into a meaningful whole is significant

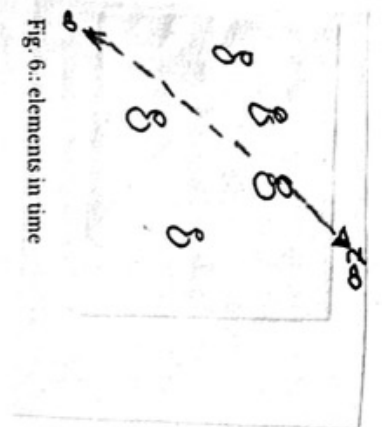


Fig. 6.: elements in time

meaning to the whole range of significant experiences in the group life.

Just as the group presents itself differently in the experience of its members, it also cannot be determined from outside when e.g. the group or a scene begins. So consider that we always work with the inner images of "the" group within the individual participant and that these images change over time. That means, part of the group can be connected to a past scene in the group life, while others are in touch with the future, both at the same time. However, an increased understanding of past processes arises from the future perspective, from a positive intention through which individuals and the group achieve a higher level of consciousness through which the networks in the system group become richer, and by this the group becomes more capable of facing new (more complex, unknown) challenges.

3.4. Integrating different dimensions

In this summarizing section we show how the development of a group can be facilitated through integration of different members or parts of the group, their different states and levels of consciousness and in time (see fig. 2, p. 44). In so doing we go into the use of media.

Humans communicate on many levels but often they restrict themselves to the conscious use of language or writing. Language is a medium but not always the appropriate one. One may act as if one had understood but says nothing because in our cultural circle language appears "normal" even when it has no meaning. So the energy in the group floats and concentrates in patterns of interactions but it can neither be transformed to order nor channelled and concretized only through verbal interaction. We experience the following scenes in groups:

for the development of the group. For facilitating this walk through time, it can be helpful to integrate past, present and future scenes by enabling participants to relate creatively through time and thus develop their relationships over time. Layer by layer the social body emerges with the potential to transform and heal "bad" times (hurts, misunderstandings, delusions ...), to discover new horizons and to give

We have observed during the process that participants' words are often incapable of expressing what is rising to the surface⁵⁶. To expand the range of communication, we have begun systematically and regularly to include other media in the process and to gather experience relating to how their introduction affects the groups' development.⁵⁷ The following considerations direct us:

A participant wants A but gets B. He tries it again and gets B. Another attempt, and again nothing ... Damn, how do I tell him this? Other words, talking, finding oneself, losing, reaching the other or annoying him. Meeting with rejection ... in the meantime the body tenses up and wants only one thing: get me out of here! A moment of recognition and clarity in the whole group occurs. There are no words, but the scene demands expression. The group is poised on the edge of development.

- Media integrate systemically, temporally and vertically (people, time and consciousness) through media there is more potential for connections because they go beyond logical languages that separate these dimensions. Media are not tied to logic: they are open to many forms of expression and truths. We communicate through a medium consciously and unconsciously, randomly and automatically, intentionally and unintentionally. In so doing we reach one another through the medium on various levels and conditions of consciousness in ourselves and in others. There is increased probability of connecting on various levels of consciousness.
- Communicating through media enables diverse sensual and sensory perceptions and experiences and thus creates a surface on which the various, conflictive meanings, needs and levels of reality can land sensually-concretely: media sustain multiple truths, members and parts of the group.
- Media connect the players and the group in time. With time the use of media interweaves with the complexities of the language and the developing social networks becoming a social piece of art. By using it in the group the material becomes a medium, a means of communication, a mediator between two or more participants, between the collec-

²⁶ This is common knowledge in the field and addressed in various ways.

27 We thank Dieter Kraft and Clara Abdel Rahman for inspiring contributions on this topic.

tive and the individual, between the general and the particular, between the personal and the transpersonal, between that which we can name and that which we cannot say.

How do we facilitate the interweaving? At the start of a t-group we introduce ourselves and we introduce the media at the same time. For this setup we may use a bamboo stick (approx. 1,5 m long) and introduce it with a simple reference, such as: "... and I also brought bamboo sticks for everybody to use. With it I invite you to use it here for communication if it serves us on our learning journey ..."

The bamboo serves as a signpost to other than verbal communication. The use of the media may serve as an extension of the individual and the collective, as participants project their conscious and unconscious totality of the moment into the process through the media and relate through it. Intentionally the sticks serve as an invitation to let come out what wants to come out beyond words and to enter into relationships. In addition to sticks, other materials are used, such as rope, paper, feathers, stones, paints or objects from the surroundings or from the seminar room which are brought in by the participants during the process. However, one's own body also comes into consideration, as it is a kind of media too (performance, presentation, personification, voice, singing, sensing, bodily awareness ...).

Through the following experiences and theses we explain how, through the use of media, various levels of consciousness and behavior can be differentiated and integrated. These can serve group dynamics learning. Heintel (2008) also speaks of this need: "The repertoire to serve the group is in my opinion relatively underdeveloped: we primarily use analog presentations and group decision games, which thus ties further development to completely concrete tasks. For the situation, the intervention in the process itself, there are comparatively few suggestions that bring about similar results. It is rather difficult for an analytically trained, distanced trainer suddenly to act, to fake excitement or spontaneously divulge his emotions; it is not easy to believe it of him, above all because his position in any case is that of expert and onlooker, who only takes part in the life of the group as an observer."

The free-flowing use of media allows for a broader leeway for self-empowered and ecologic development²⁸, as minds and souls are different and people learn in different ways. Opening the space for pluralistic expression creates access to more resources and increases the possibility to re-connect to the undivided source of vital energy or the flow of life.

• *Media channel conscious and unconscious processes in the group*

Media carry meaning on various levels and at various states of consciousness. They are vehicles to differentiate, connect and integrate temporally, vertically and socially. They help people to relate as they communicate on different levels of consciousness (primitive, ego and generative level) and from different states of consciousness (pure awareness, creative unconscious, conscious mind).

For example, through a pencil drawing or a spontaneous placement or other use of the sticks or other material in interaction, different states of consciousness manifest themselves at the same time and we can make use of them. Through subsequent decelerated digestion of the creative activities which previously took place unconsciously, these can be brought into consciousness: for example, a tension between two participants becomes visible through the spontaneous placement of a stick between them. The stick is observed: the exchange about it is decelerated, which deepens the process of looking inward and of reflecting the impact.

After experiencing the creative act, it becomes possible, first through the phenomenological view (pure awareness) and later through reflection, to make the unconscious conscious. For one participant the stick can mean "... he pointed the stick against me and I knew he wanted to fight and I would fight back" for one person (primitive level of consciousness) and for the other "I feel confused, I want to connect with you because I feel tension and I am interested in discovering what is between us and how this affects the whole group" (generative level). Others in the group can relate accordingly. This has immediate repercussions on the relationships in free activity. Through the medium the group members make contact with each other while discovering the unknown between them. Development occurs by going through this process. The wisdom and feeling for the right point in time for making an intervention thus lies more in the system. In addition, the artifacts occasionally provide the necessary impulses; observant leadership can use these signs and energies for effective interventions.

As a temporal movement, the group might as well create more complex artifacts and change them. Through giving expression to one's own experiences, what was previously hidden can move step by step into the mutual consciousness. Gradually the group is building capacity to reflect on more complex (rigid or creative) patterns within the social body and learn how to influence them. Media also serve as projection screens and lend themselves to uncovering the collective blind spot.

²⁸ In the sense of Bateson (1974), see page 49 in this book.

- *Media hold differences & paradox, protect and expose*

If a medium catches someone's attention it becomes imbued with deeper meaning and emotional engagement (whether it is rejection or acceptance). We give it a symbolic value, consciously or unconsciously and this attribution differs according to person, gender, state of mind, religion, willingness to participate, testosterone level, etc. When participants refer to the symbol the load it with different meanings.

Let's take an example, a medium can protect or expose: We do not make contact directly, but through a symbol – "say what you have to say (no matter if you know it or not) with a stick". We become visible through this action however our core selves remain invisible.²⁹ This can be helpful to connect whenever it is stressful to deal with strong emotions, insecurity, joy ... whatever kind of situation. Letting media guide us creates an environment of vulnerability in which we let parts of ourselves be revealed. If this process goes on it shows the differences in the group. The facets of the symbol in turn reveal the facets of the participants. Gradually their shell falls off and the media loses its previous meaning. Transformation has taken place, the symbol has served its purpose. We are now able to communicate freely - with or without media! Thank you, media.

- *With time, media build a parallel narration*

Groups on their learning journey write a story. In the opening scenes, media often point at the group's invisible secret, and perhaps also at the key. Individual organisms and the emerging social body carry this information within themselves. Bringing it out is occasionally risky as the journey leads into the unknown future of the group. Media can guide on this journey. Due to their long (in comparison to language) lives, they permit us to carve traces in time. They are signposts for the future, anchors for the past and crystallize meaning throughout time. In this sense the media reflects back on the group and influences it. In retrospect the development and maturity of a group is structurally reflected in the aesthetics of its artifacts as a parallel narration.

²⁹ ... or shines through. Media symbolize the general and the particular, the personal and the transpersonal. They thereby give meaning and a foothold to particulars, and thus connect and heal them in a creative act. They are a symbol for us, living generalities that provide us with protection: living generalities in which, no matter how threatening it may be, we with our individual experiences are well off, not lost, not alone.

- *Media find words and get us to speak*

Media are projection screens and bearers of verbal messages or statements that are not yet disclosed. For example, because the message or statement is conscious but is not articulated, or cannot be articulated because the words are missing or the consciousness is not yet ready for something that is in a state of becoming.

They invite some to enter the unknown space and deter others from doing so. Because there is neither a compulsion to speak nor a compulsion to use the medium, the medium also invites the creation of differences. Media offer working spaces and stages for the expression of differences in which they can spring into action; through their trans-rational quality they also unite differences without talking about them. – Irrespective of the cultural background.

Pages promoted this in 1968, when he described interventions as spontaneous dialog, open listening, expressive pluralism and mobile answering to meet the requirements of the different instantaneous structures. The skills that are needed are development of sensitivity for different social situations, a broad variety of – perhaps also conflicting – interpretation schemes, and an expressive potential with the ability to express feelings in a different way to react spontaneously according to new situations.

Methodologically it is striking that media trigger useful reflection on the process and encourage other points of view than might be possible through articulation. We have observed that if the sensual-concrete expression is shallow, reflection usually degenerates into rationalization. That is also explicable, because thinking always refers to thinking (as long as the thinker remains unaware of his thinking). As soon as other sensory perceptions are added, the levels change and meaning is created. In sensually meager groups or group leadership, emotional outbursts have to fill these gaps – and they often do so (some people call this breakthrough of drives). It is nothing spectacular, but it is to be expected. We favor greater freedom of expression and in self-revelation, for this is what organizations need in order to heal senselessness and collective sensations of senselessness (Krainz 2011). Media used in process work are a way of offering some people a natural level of expression that can then be translated into other "languages" – and back again. This includes, that some group members might not have an idea of what to do with paper, sticks or a string, or want nothing to do with them, just as for some participants words that are said have no meaning.

Once more we stress that we openly introduce media only in the beginning. In the course of the process their use and meaning depends on the process, including the fact that we as facilitators eventually communicate

through them as well. This process driven use of media differs from structured use of media, which is more common in t-groups (for example by announcing an exercise).

Because the unconscious is more powerful than the conscious in sustaining desired as well as undesired states (Schmidt 2011, Grawe 2004, Gilligan 2013), learning about this is essential, because the state and level of consciousness from which we make contact determine our experience of reality and our actions. When we include a sensual-concrete level of communication (for example, via media observation of body awareness and awareness of feelings as natural forms of human communication can take place), we have a broad repertoire with which to accompany learning and development processes more comprehensively. If we want to allow this social learning to become an experience which fills the body and proves to increase resources, it requires both a different method of focusing attention and feedback as to whether the style of processing really meets the people at the point of their strengths (Schmidt 2011). Here we can strengthen and integrate a new way of processing, namely intensified self-reflection contact with the group dynamics reflection tradition.



Fig. 7: The shadow of the social body & sticks

4. Outlook: How are we connected & contained?

In conclusion we return to the medium that we as leaders represent when at various stages of our professional development we are involved in a group's creative process. Our work reflects back on us, creations take over and become inspirational for us. We become the third person, the media for this creation (Max Ernst). How can we as facilitators do a good job? Our outlook here is directed into the group and into ourselves as facilitators.³⁰

Staff collaboration

Generative group dynamics requires a form of staff work that supports us and inspires us to do our best. Staff work and the work in the group are interrelated. Consciously shaped cooperative professional exchanges with the goal of supporting each other, expressing perceptions, recognizing patterns and uncovering blind spots support us in our group work – and the other way round.

We trainers also learn in concrete situations, and it would be a shame not to use these cooperative professional resources to expand our repertoire of perception and behavior. Staff work is a prototyping playground for practicing creative relations, too: holding multiple truths among the staff, accepting and connecting with different members while doing our work. In order for mutual containment conscious work to be guaranteed, we have to take sufficient care of this among staff members. It is essential to know what is helpful for the retrieval of one's self-connection (silence, exchanges among staff, nature, exercise, change of scenery etc.) to be then able to connect with others.

Intention & vertical connection

As varied as the intentions to facilitate group dynamics may be, it is essential for each facilitator to be clear or become clear about his or her intentions. Otherwise it becomes arbitrary (anything goes) or inflexible (concept downloading). Even without any content, trainers are still no empty canvases, i.e. they bring with them structures, intentions, judgments, concepts, (un)con-

³⁰ There are similar implications to leadership, individual and distributed. – But this is the subject for another publication.

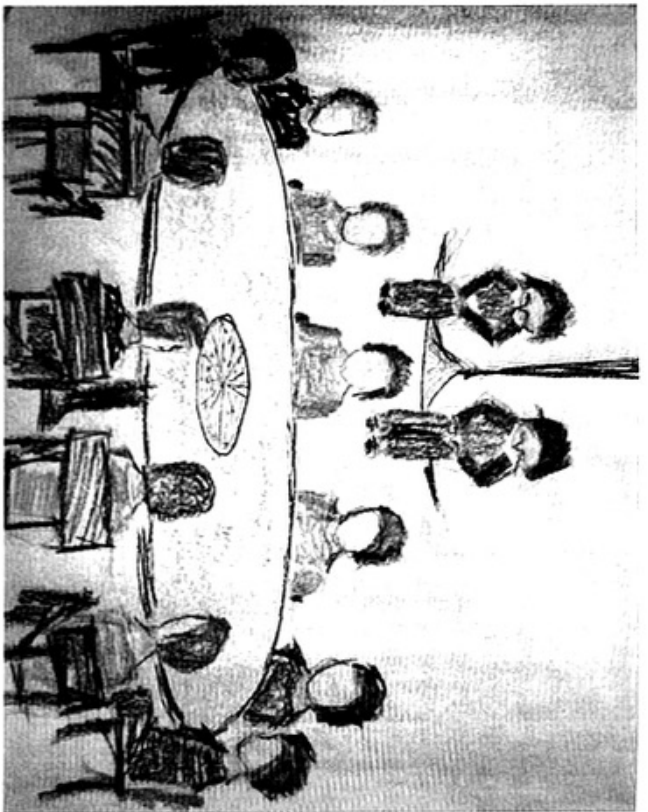


Fig. 8: related, differentiated, connected & ready to ...

scious involvement in what happens.³¹ Trainers as well as other group members function with each other as a projection screen for sense or lack thereof. This is sometimes directly verbalized, sometimes not, and more often it is not even conscious. How do we behave when these questions arise? The more subtly we deal with this and make ourselves available, the more we can learn, also collectively, about challenging and inhibiting contributions from leadership, and grow together.³² Apart from that, the clarification of one's

³¹ Intentionally dealing with the expression of intentions is not routine in every training tradition. Handsteiner (2013) reports on an established practice at ISABS.

³² The distinctive feature of group dynamics exploration is that the leader must see her or his self as a part of the group. We are ourselves a part of this creation, to which we want to find our way back, or forwards. In our understanding of our role we have to shape our contributions transparently and put ourselves at the group's disposal so that the trainer-group relationship and the influence of these interactions can be learned. Out of the connections of the group and the specifically networked individuals within it, by means of group dynamics explorations of its specific way of self creation or the "group soul" (Ycomans 1996), the group unlocks the source of its productivity.

own intentions in the course of one's professional life and calling is a constant task in any case.

The inner source of a facilitator's action is connected to a greater "what for". It is linked both forwards and backwards to undivided, flowing creative power, to practices in finding an experienced performance that is mutually desired, positive and rich in resources, and that also experiences failure. At best these detours increase one's knowledge of one's own place, when we perceive them, welcome them and reconnect ourselves to our intentions. This is where our own "containment" comes into play. How well and clearly we are connected with something bigger than ourselves in our work and also how far this can be socially maintained and witnessed by staff has, in our opinion, influence on happenings in the group. The more favorable the connection, the richer it is in resources.

The group which comes into being profits not only from the good connections of leadership to a higher source, but also from the unfolding of creative potential of individuals relating to the whole.

The awakening and the transformation of the group through the emerging sense structure the group in its distinctiveness; while we also change from participating observers to experiencing, mutually perceiving and imparting truth sharers, who lead the group.

Look inside

To look inward during the stream of experience, instead of seeking the explanation for one's own feelings, thoughts, wants or troubles as a reaction to outer circumstances only outside oneself, requires a complete turnaround for many people and seems to take time getting used to it because it is strange. The I-group and the staff group provide a creative space to practice and refine the look-inside-and-connecting-with-others-movements in mind, body and soul to experience the effects on the quality of the collaboration. Thereby feelings have an essential influence on our attention and actions, also for us trainers, although "one is not at all in the same boat with the feelings", due to the longer experience trainers have in group dynamics settings, as Lindner (1997) describes the emotional distance between trainers and participants. This experience becomes dissociative when it is taken into the repertoire as a secure assurance; if the encounter with uncertainty generates into an assembly line product we have missed a chance – this time.

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