# The Tavistock Primer II

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**PREFACE**

Since 1977, when it was first published as an article in the University Associates' "Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators", "A Tavistock Primer" has been used in graduate programs in organizational, clinical, and counseling psychology, organization behavior and organization development, social work, psychiatry residency programs, and training programs for group facilitators, human relations internship programs, and by organizations sponsoring group relations conferences as a lay person's guide to what conferences based on the "Tavistock" model are all about. During the nearly quarter century since it was written, the theoretical underpinnings of the educational model have been more thoroughly explored, and the design and structure of conferences have developed in several dimensions as sponsoring organizations and conference directors seek to maintain the relevance of the learning model in the midst of dramatic cultural and institutional changes. It is our desire to continue in the tradition of the first version of this article by making it accessible to people beyond the realm of practicing group relations consultants but to honor the considerable advancements in theory and practice achieved by those within the tradition. One of the authors (Hayden) would like to acknowledge her gratitude to Tony Banet, a former staff member of University Associates, for the original invitation to create such a piece. That invitation represented an early, and very helpful, invitation to get clear about what this work is all about. Another point of gratitude is to co-author René Molenkamp who persisted in making this new version, Tavistock Primer II, a reality.

The entire article has been rewritten, but there are some segments that contain entirely new or significantly reinterpreted material that has emerged from group relations practice in the last quarter century. To provide a quick reference to new material for those familiar with the earlier Primer, the new sections include the following:



Like any surviving educational institution, the A. K. Rice Institute for the Study of Social Systems (including its regional Affiliates) has been moved to change by interaction with its external environment as well as by the increased skill and understanding developing among its practitioners. Since one of its primary activities is stewardship of a learning model that aims to reflect the world around it, the Institute has attempted to stay relevant to contemporary organizational life through experimenting with the structure and focus of

its conferences. Maintaining relevance is no small challenge as a global community has emerged, especially through the aegis of automated systems of communication and commerce. There have been huge changes in the nature of leadership required in this period of rapid transition, as well as assumptions about the appropriate exercise of authority in every field of work and organizational role. Practitioners within the Tavistock framework for studying organizational experience have been pressed to re-examine their goals and methodologies while preserving what is worthwhile in their tradition. This chapter is an attempt to convey something about that dynamic process for the reader who wants to know how and where the approach originated and how it is developing.

## INTRODUCTION

Although groups provide the customary setting for human relations training, groups as groups are not generally the main focus of training approaches. Many facilitators and trainers seem to regard groups as aggregates of individuals who cluster together to learn about intrapersonal dynamics or interpersonal relations. Group relations - the dynamics of the group as a holistic system - are often viewed only as background, the mere context for the more important examination of personal growth and interpersonal interactions.

This focus on the individual rather than the group derives primarily from a prevalent cultural norm in the United States that the individual is the primary unit of interest in society. Groups and organizations are often seen as inherently oppressive and constrictive. Families, and other early, influential organizational systems, convey social constructions that require conformity and the painful constriction of self-expression to the unprotected child's psyche. In response to those messages from the culture, the human potential movement spawned in the late 60's and early 70's formed some central tenets toward which personal development was supposed to be directed: that we as individuals are responsible for our own behavior, that we control our own destiny, that we can make things happen for ourselves. In their eagerness to liberate individuals from the pressures toward conformity imposed by family, community, and institutions, many human development specialists, whether educators or therapists, tended to ignore or minimize the potential influence of group dynamics on the individual's experience and capacity to act. The idea that "empowering" oneself from within was the key to lifetime fulfillment was partly able to prevail as a self-development technology because it posited an optimistic outcome to problems of human existence and social intercourse based on the perfectibility of each individual. It has survived and flourished because it largely avoids addressing the painful, the hidden, and sometimes sinister, irrational processes that affect individuals in group life. The question of why we as individuals often act differently as members of groups than we would were we acting solely on behalf of ourselves (as if this were possible!) receives little attention. When it does, it is typically hypothesized as the effect of an individual "losing perspective" or "lacking in self-esteem".

The hallmark of Tavistock, or group relations, conference work is the attempt to more fully see things as they are in organizational life. Conferences are not designed to root out the causes of organizational distress and create "better" or more humane systems, but rather to investigate these causes so that when participants return to their "back home" organizations they can see them more clearly. The model presumes that once one's field of vision has been enlarged, more choices can become available for individual actions. That this approach has not taken hold in all schools of business, government, law, medicine, education and the arts, etc., can be understood. This framework for learning sometimes shakes the foundation of more cheerful assumptions about human perfectibility.

While Gestalt, encounter, and other approaches emphasize individual uniqueness and often focus on the dyad as a central linking function linking us to one another, the approach known as "Tavistock" concentrates on the individual only insofar as s/he is manifesting something on behalf of the whole group. This method, named after the renowned British human relations training center where it originated, regards the group as a holistic entity that in some ways is greater than the sum of its parts. The lens of Tavistock theory focuses not on the distinctions between individuals but rather brings into bold relief their commonality of task, function, and motivation; as a consequence, group-level phenomena that are usually invisible become clearer and more distinct. Despite its extraordinary power and theoretical richness, the Tavistock method is not well known or understood in the field of human relations training, probably for the reasons delineated above, and definitely because of uncertainty on behalf of many of its proponents about how to demonstrate its utility in ongoing social systems.

## HISTORY AND ORIGINS

The Tavistock method began with the work of the British psychoanalyst Wilfred R. Bion. In the late 1940s, Bion conducted a series of small study groups at the Centre for Applied Social Research in London's Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. Bion’s previous experience with military leadership training and the rehabilitation of psychiatric patients convinced him of the importance of considering not only the individual in treatment, but also the group of which the individual is a member. Schooled in the psychoanalytic tradition of Melanie Klein, Bion employed her innovative method of direct, confrontive intervention while working with the study groups, and reported his experiences in the late 1950’s in a series of articles for the journal “Human Relations.” Later published in book form as “Experiences in Groups” (1961), this seminal work stimulated further experimentation at Tavistock and other locations with Bion's novel approach of "taking" a group and viewing it as a collective entity. Bion’s personal style, of not engaging in typical social niceties and often looking at the floor or at a focal point beyond group members, became a consulting stance which continues to influence those doing group relations conference consultation.

Gradually, the approach evolved into a method. In 1957, the Tavistock Institute and the University of Leicester co-sponsored the first group relations conference, a two-week experiential learning event that focused on the roles that participants assumed in work groups. Buttressed by Bion's theory, the conference design also showed the influence of Kurt Lewin and the experimental ideas of the National Training Laboratories in the United States. This first conference led to others.

The conference design began to evolve to include the study of more complex group phenomena. A. Kenneth Rice, then Chairman of Tavistock's Centre for Applied Social Research and a member of one of Bion's early study groups in 1947-48, led a fundamental change in the conception of the conference events by adding first a large study group and what was then called an intergroup event to the conference model. Rice, a sociotechnical systems analyst, also began to focus conference work toward application of participants' learning in the outside world. Under his leadership conference design emphasis shifted from the roles individuals assumed in small work groups to the dynamics of leadership and authority relations in groups and larger systems. In his "Learning for Leadership" (1965), Rice stated that the primary task of a group relations conference is to provide participants with opportunities to learn about leadership. Some time after that, the primary objective was redefined as the study of authority and the problems encountered in its exercise. More recently, conference themes have proliferated to include many special foci such as gender and race as they affect the exercise of authority, and a plethora of other related topics; for example, "Aligning Passion and Task." An emphasis throughout the development of conference design has been the study of authority, what it is and how it is either vested or withheld from oneself by oneself or by others. Rice also emphasized the learning that could emerge from studying the conference itself as an institution that transacted with its environment. Rice's views, which echoed Bion's earlier, touchstone hypothesis that individuals cannot be understood - or indeed, changed, outside the context of the groups in which they live, shaped the contours of the group relations conference as a learning context. The conference became a stimulating blend of psychoanalytic and sociotechnical systems thinking, a synthesis which continues to distinguish it from most other experiential learning models.

Under Rice's influence, experiential group work during the 1960s in Great Britain became synonymous with the group relations method; in contrast, experiential groups in the United States during the same period were becoming quite diverse. They moved away from an early focus on group dynamics in experimental T-groups, and on to personal growth and the study of interpersonal dynamics as described in the Introduction above.

Rice directed all the Tavistock-Leicester conferences from 1962 to 1968. In 1965, he led the first group relations conference in the United States at Mount Holyoke College. This event, co-sponsored by the Washington School of Psychiatry and the Yale University Department of Psychiatry, was supported by Margaret Rioch, Morris Parloff, and F. C.

Redlich, who were instrumental in the development of the Tavistock method in the United States. A series of Centers (currently called Affiliates of the A. K. Rice Institute) developed over the next twenty years as individuals who had been members of the founding organizations relocated and started these Centers or those who had participated in conferences went home and began assembling groups of interested people in their own cities. In 1971, after Ken Rice's untimely death, the A.K. Rice Institute was established in his name for the purpose of supporting and promulgating group relations work in this country. Margaret Rioch became a major American champion for this initiative.

Currently, training in group relations is provided by the Tavistock Institute in Great Britain and by the A. K. Rice Institute and its Affiliates in the United States, as well as other organizations in several countries throughout the world. (See listing of international organizations sponsoring group relations conferences at the end of this chapter.) As seems fitting, no single person can be regarded as the founder of the group relations method, but the founding group would have to include Bion, Rice, and, in the United States, Margaret Rioch. See K.W. Back, "Beyond Words" (1972) and Margaret Rioch, "Group Relations: Rationale and Technique" (1970) for more extensive historical accounts of the Tavistock method's evolution.

**BASIC PREMISES**

An aggregate cluster of persons becomes a group when interaction between members occurs, when members begin to invest energy in their shared relationship, and when a common group task emerges. When this task emerges as a tangible goal (Let's establish a food coop.), we call this the **work task** of the group. This level of group functioning results in the birth of a group based on the conscious decision of individuals to cluster together to achieve a goal that no one of them could achieve alone. **Work group** behavior can also relate to an already existing group deciding to take new approaches to accomplishing a longstanding goal or adopting new ones, etc.

Many forces can operate to produce a group - an external threat, various kinds of collective regressive behavior, or attempts to satisfy needs for security, safety, dependency, and affection, etc. Essential to the Tavistock approach is the belief that when an aggregate of people becomes a group, the group behaves as a system - an entity or organism that is in some respects greater than the sum of its individual parts. When such an organism takes life, just as any other naturally occurring organism, its fundamental task becomes what it must do to survive. We call this the **survival task** of the group. Although this fundamental task is frequently disguised or masked, survival as a group becomes the primary preoccupation and latent motivating force for all group members, on an unconscious plane. This emphasis on survival at a level of experience usually out of range of conscious thought or feeling, provides the framework for the exploration of group behavior, with major emphasis on the dynamics of authorization, leadership, and responsibility, that is pursued in Tavistock conference life. The **work group** and the **survival group** co-exist, at times being helpful to and compatible with

each other, and at times being in conflict over which is to serve as the group's primary energizing factor.

In a group relations, or Tavistock, conference, exploring the group as a whole requires a perceptual shift on the part of group members and the consulting staff who work with them. This shift requires limiting if not discarding an emphasis on individual separateness, and a readiness to see the collective motivation expressed in the activities of individual group members. Just as a family is "something more" than individual parents and children, just as an organization is "something more" than executives, managers, and line workers, so any group is "something more". It is a new entity with its own unique energies and dynamic forces.

Under the lens of the group relations framework, individuals are recognized as voices of the collective that emerge from time to time on behalf of the whole. Their experiences and contributions in the group are sources of data that express various elements of the group as a whole. What this perspective implies is that members of a group are in continually interdependent relationship with each other. They depend on each other to express the dilemmas actually belonging to the whole group. For example, say there are two group members who are in conflict about whether the group should meet to work together over the dinner hour. One person fervently argues that this is needed, and the other just as passionately declares that individuals need their time alone. This conflict could be seen as expressing the larger group's ambivalence about whether to push on with its work or to meet individuals' needs first. In other words, whatever group members are saying within this framework, they are talking about the group, and demonstrating their connectedness in the group. As Bion (1961) described in one metaphor, we may observe individual gears, springs, and levers and only guess at the proper function, but when the pieces of machinery are combined, they become a clock, performing a function as a whole, a function impossible for individual parts to achieve.

When individuals become members of a group, their behavior changes and a collective identity emerges: a task force, an athletic team, a lynch mob, a utopian community, an organization to hasten zero population growth. Each one transforms into a new Gestalt in which the group is focal and the individual members become the background. As individuals join, membership in the group becomes an exciting but often ambiguous experience, one that invites individual members to join in the task at hand but also triggers their unconscious fantasies and projections about belonging. Usually, their conflicts about leadership and authority emerge in the joining process as well. One of Bion's most interesting concepts described the presence of a dilemma that faces all of us in relation to any group or social system. He hypothesized that each of us has a predisposition to be either more afraid of what he called "engulfment" in a group or "extrusion" from a group. This intrinsic facet of each of us joins with the circumstances in any particular setting to move us to behave in ways that act upon this dilemma. For example, those of us who fear engulfment more intensely may vie for highly differentiated roles in the group such as leader or gatekeeper or scout. Those of us who

fear extrusion more intensely may opt for less visible roles such as participant, voter, "ordinary citizen", etc. Bion's idea was that each of us may react upon one or the other side of this dilemma depending on the context, but that the question is always with us of how to "hold" the self, or, put another way, how to assure our personal survival within the life of the collective.

So, the basic premises of the group-as-a-whole approach can be summarized as follows:

- The primary motivating force in any group is what it must do to survive; therefore the group is always engaged at an unconscious level in the survival task.
- The group has a life of its own only as a consequence of the fantasies and projections of its members.
- The group uses its members in the service of its survival task; therefore individuals may have limited control of their own experiences and behavior.
- The behavior of any group member at any moment is the expression of his/her own needs, history, and behavior patterns **and** the needs, history, and behavior patterns of the group.
- Whatever an individual in the group is doing or talking about, through him or her, the group is always reflecting itself.
- In the face of powerful unconscious forces, authority and leadership, as well as the exercise of personal responsibility, become key dynamics for the group.
- Understanding the group processes may provide group members with heightened awareness and the ability to make previously unavailable choices about their roles and functioning in a group setting.

Because Wilfred Bion (1961) is the principal theorist behind the Tavistock method, a brief description of his theory is provided here.

**Bion's Theory**

Groups, like dreams, have a manifest, overt aspect and a latent, covert aspect. The manifest aspect is the ***work group***, a level of functioning at which members consciously pursue an agreed-upon objective and deliberately engage in the completion of a work task. Although group members always have hidden agendas - parts of themselves that they consciously or unconsciously plan not to share with the group - they rely on internal and external controls to prevent these hidden agendas from emerging and interfering with the announced group task. When they hold their hidden agendas consciously, group members can pool their rational thinking and combine their skills to solve problems, make decisions, and focus on work goal achievement.

However, groups do not always function rationally or productively, nor are individual members necessarily aware of the kinds of internal and external controls they rely on to maintain the boundary between their announced intentions and their hidden agendas. The combined hidden agendas of group members constitute the latent aspect of group life, the

*basic assumption group*. In contrast to the rational, civilized, task-oriented *work group*, the *basic assumption group* is comprised of unconscious wishes, fears, defenses, fantasies, impulses, and projections. The *work group* is focused away from itself, toward the work task; the *basic assumption group*, by contrast, is focused inward, toward fantasy and a more primitive reality. A tension always exists between the *work group* and the *basic assumption group*, a tension usually balanced by various behavioral and psychological structures, including individual defense systems, ground rules, expectations, and group norms.

**Basic Assumptions**

On the basic assumption level of functioning, behavior is "as if" behavior: the group behaves *as if* a certain assumption is true, valid, and real, and *as if* certain behaviors are vital to the group's survival. As Bion pointed out, both words -"basic" and "assumption"- are important to understanding the term. "Basic" refers to the survival motivation of the group; "assumption" underscores the fact that the survival motivation is based, not on fact or reality, but on the collective projections of the group.

Bion identified three distinct types of basic assumptions: *dependency*, *fight/flight*, and *pairing*. Turquet (1974) has added a fourth – *oneness*.

*Basic Assumption Dependency*. The essential aim of this level of group functioning is to obtain security and protection from one individual - either the designated leader or a member who assumes that role. Members of this type of group begin waiting around, not knowing what to do, and needing things. In other words, the group behaves as if it is stupid, incompetent, inert, or psychotic in the hope that it will be rescued from its impotency by a powerful leader who will instruct and direct the group toward task completion. When every/any leader fails to meet these impossible demands, the group members express their disappointment and hostility in a variety of ways. The basic assumption *dependency* often serves as a lure for a charismatic leader who exerts authority through powerful personal characteristics. Group members believe for a while that their depression and paralysis will be taken care of for them. Eventually, of course, this approach breaks down.

*Basic Assumption Fight/Flight*. In this mode of functioning, the group perceives its survival as dependent on either fighting (active aggression, scapegoating, physical attack) or fleeing from an enemy (withdrawal, passivity, avoidance, ruminating on past history). At times, this "enemy" can even **become** the task – a group in this form of basic assumption functioning may be relatively nonchalant about what it chooses. Anyone who mobilizes the aggressive forces of the group is granted leadership, but the persistent bickering, in-fighting, and competition make most leadership efforts short-lived. In *flight* functioning, leadership is usually bestowed on an individual who minimizes the importance of the task and facilitates the group movement away from its work.

*Basic Assumption Pairing*. *Pairing* phenomena include bonding between two individuals who express warmth and affection or excitement leading to intimacy and closeness. The pair involved need not be a man and a woman. Such a pair or pairs often provide mutual intellectual support to the extent that other members become inactive. When the group assumes this mode of functioning, it imagines that its survival is contingent on its reproduction; that is, in some magic way, a "Messiah" will be born to save the group and help it complete its task. The feeling in *pairing* groups is often pleasant because its atmosphere is full of hope. When basic assumption *fight/flight* and *pairing* intersect, as basic assumption constructions sometimes do as they flow in and out of one another, the tone of the group is often one of erotic aggression.

*Basic Assumption Oneness*. This level of functioning occurs "when members seek to join in a powerful union with an omnipotent force, unobtainably high, to surrender self for passive participation, and thereby to feel existence, well-being, and wholeness" (Turquet, 1974, p. 357). The group commits itself to a "movement," a cause outside itself, as a way of survival. Leaders who offer a philosophy of life or methods to achieve higher levels of consciousness become attractive to the group in this mode of basic assumption functioning. Members of *oneness* groups appear to lose their capacity to think and instead get filled with a sense of being merged with each other.

Lawrence, Bain, and Gould (1995) proposed a fifth basic assumption as the opposite of basic assumption *oneness* called *me-ness*. Their hypothesis is that this basic assumption occurs when people in a group work on the unconscious assumption that the group is to be a non-group. The fear of engulfment by the group causes members to behave as if there is no reality to the group. The only reality to be considered is that of the individual.

The basic assumption life of any group is never exhausted, nor is it imperative for a group to rid itself of its basic assumption characteristics. In fact, as Bion perceived society, certain institutions capitalize on our collective basic assumption strivings and provide structures and vehicles to channel these strong, primitive feelings. In such organizations, basic assumption life is harnessed in the service of the work task. For instance, the church attempts to satisfy *dependency* needs; the military and industry employ *fight/flight* motivation; and the aristocracy and the political system - with their emphasis on breeding and succession - build on basic assumption *pairing*. The diminished but continuing emphasis on mysticism and cosmic consciousness seems to be an expression of basic assumption *oneness*. In most organizations, however, when group members behave in ways that have more to do with supporting basic assumptions than with achieving their shared goals, they become anti-work. Anti-work behaviors result from unconscious fears of group disintegration or destruction, and participation in them is instantaneous and instinctive.

Bion's theory is the cornerstone of the Tavistock method: it serves as a framework for the group-as-a-whole approach. Extensions of the theory to work groups and psychotherapy situations are provided by many authors (see the references at the end of this chapter).

**The Functioning of Social Defense Mechanisms**

There are a variety of other key concepts that help elucidate the phenomena often observed in group relations conferences (and in ongoing organizations) – here we would like to describe two of the most important ones. The purpose of these mechanisms is to simplify the individual's (or group's) internal experience and reduce the anxiety inherent in all social interactions. Even though we may not be aware of anxious reactions to finding ourselves in social settings, this framework hypothesizes that we are.

***Projection***. Projection is the result of an individual's or a group's drive to disown undesirable parts of themselves because the complexity of holding these parts inside is too alarming or painful. For example, a "pro-life" group may frame its attack on a "pro-choice" group as part of a campaign against murder – murderous motives are publicly projected into the "pro-choice" group. Ironically of course, when a "pro-life" individual or group acts to kill or injure a "pro-choice" group member, the question of where murderous urges do reside has to be asked. There are many socially repugnant impulses and ethically indefensible motives in all of us. When we cannot bear to know or to "own" these in ourselves, we must export them to another location, usually in another individual or group, in order to keep them out of conscious awareness. In conference life, these kinds of projections often relate to feelings of anger, ambition, aggression, desire, envy, competition, etc. – the gamut of emotional motives that are often culturally discouraged, or at least channeled, in particular ways. In a conference, a female group member may state that the consultant is angry with another member when in fact the member is the one who is angry - but it's not "nice" for women to "fight".

***Projective Identification*** Projective identification occurs when the recipient of a projection accepts the unwanted feelings of another and makes them his/her own. In other words, a projection finds enough receptors in its object to stick. A male member who is feeling particularly vulnerable about his competence to work in the group may turn to a female member and say, "So, how are you? You don't look like you're having a good time." If the female responds by describing how confused she feels, and begins to tear up, the projection has been identified with by her, and then secondarily by the male who projected it when he moves to put his arm around her and says, "It's ok, I do understand how you can feel that way."

Through projective processes, group members are connected to each other by passion, indifference, contempt, respect, love, guilt, hate, or through any other experience potential in the human species. (Gilette & McCollum, 1995). Projective processes often form the fabric of a particular group. The challenge a work group faces is whether and how to encourage reciprocal taking back and pushing back, or reclaiming and rejecting, of projections that have damaged members' capacity to engage fully in achieving the group's work goals.

## THE GROUP RELATIONS CONFERENCE

The Tavistock theoretical framework can be applied to understanding the dynamics of any group or social system. The conference model, however, was primarily originated to increase awareness of group phenomena and their impact on leadership and authority. Group relations conferences are characterized by a clear statement of objectives, specific staff roles, and a systemic application of the group-as-a-whole theoretical approach. A typical advertising brochure might describe the aims and principles of a group relations conference as follows.

The ability of an individual, or of a group, to lead effectively is determined in large measure by the way authority is vested in him/her, or the group, by others. The factors that influence this process can best be understood when they are seen in actual operation. The conference, therefore, is created as a temporary organization to offer its participants an opportunity to study what happens within and among groups at the same time that it is happening. The learning that takes place arises from the direct experience of the participants. The aim is to bring together experience and thought, emotion and intellect, without neglecting one for the other.

Throughout the conference special attention is paid to the covert processes that operate in and among groups. Unspoken attitudes and behavior patterns may hinder or further group tasks outside the awareness of those involved. Increased observation and greater understanding of such processes can lead to more effective participation in work group activities.

The conference is open-ended in the sense that there is no attempt to prescribe what anyone shall learn. The focus, however, is on the problems encountered in the exercise of authority both within and among groups.

The conference staff believe that people who attend this type of conference can increase their understanding about the nature and exercise of their own authority as well as that of others, and can therefore be equipped to deal more effectively with the challenges of working in ongoing institutions. In particular, they can make decisions about how to take on the responsibilities of leadership and/or followership.

The design of the conference includes a variety of group events each of which provides a different context for studying authority and group dynamics. Throughout each conference event, the staff encourages examination of all aspects of its behavior as well as the behavior of the members. The accountability of staff, who are exercising delegated and sanctioned, as well as personal authority, to provide learning opportunities can be examined, as well as the participation of members in pursuing their own learning goals.

The sponsoring organization and the staff believe that the conference experience and later reflection upon its various events can contribute to a capacity for more effective leadership and followership in the various roles the members occupy in their own institutions. Beyond this, we recognize that for each participant there is a different set of expectations and a different set of priorities in making use of this learning experience.

**Conference Design**

In the early years, design of group relations conferences was patterned closely after the original design of Rice, who intended to provide participants with experience-based, group opportunities wherein their task was "to study their own behavior as it happens " (Rice, 1965, as quoted in Colman & Bexton, 1975, p. 72). In the past two and a half decades there has been major experimentation with the theme of conferences and with the type and arrangement of conference events. Most conference events are still structured so that the members have the consultation of at least one staff member to facilitate their task. Role behavior is still prescribed for the staff in the various events, although perhaps less rigidly so, in order to honor their contract with the members to provide learning opportunities related to authority, and to clarify their own authority structure. However, no rules are made for the members; they are free to experiment with any behavior that they believe will enhance their learning.

***Theme Conferences***

Perhaps the most striking evolutionary element of group relations conferences in the United States has been the proliferation of “theme” conferences. These conferences aim to focus on potentially problematic aspects of organizational life such as the presence of defensive stereotypes like racism, sexism, ageism, as well as other kinds of unconsciously held biases operating in groups. Homophobia, interprofessional discrimination, ethnic projections, and other forms of social defenses have been the focus of study in conferences. In addition, some conference directors have set their sights on institutional issues like the struggle between the fulfillment of self and achieving a common good, and how to put passion together with work in an organization. A prevalent new theme in conferences in recent years has also been how diversity/identity relate to authority. Spirituality as an organizing theme has just begun to be explored.

There is another form of theme conference which has been created by Gordon Lawrence called the “social dreaming” conference. Its approach does not fall into the traditional group relations conference because it lacks a focus on the dynamics of authority and leadership. However, as a model for illuminating the unconscious collective forces at play in a group, it employs powerful and creative methods that derive from earlier group relations thinking.

Whether the theme conference is generally effective in providing the learning opportunities it strives for has been widely examined among sponsoring groups and those who direct group relations conferences. No conclusion has been reached about the efficacy of this form of conference since it seems that just when a particular aspect of the conference system's unconscious life becomes the focus of the work it moves even more deeply underground, and other tantalizing elements of group experience take center stage.

***System Specific Conferences***

Another area of experimentation in conference design has been the attempt to focus on the dynamics of a particular kind of organization. Conferences focused on health care, religious organizations, educational and social services institutions, have proliferated. Much like the theme conferences, the assessment of the success of this kind of conference focus is difficult. Normally these conferences are attended by those who have ongoing affiliations with such organizations, so it is interesting to consider the effect of what members are bringing in *versus* what originates in the conference context. In some ways, of course, this does not distinguish the kind of exploration that can be done in one of these conferences from any other.

In keeping with a desire to create contexts where larger types of systems can be studied, recently there was an attempt to sponsor a conference in "virtual" space in which members would communicate through electronic means. Not enough people signed up to "attend"; however, this modality seems likely to be taken up again when electronic communication means provide additional aspects such as visual connections. In addition, many conferences, both sponsored and cosponsored by Affiliates of the A.K. Rice Institute in the U.S. and not sponsored by them, are occurring within the context of a variety of universities and colleges. Often these organizations include infrastructures of their own which are designed to sponsor conferences and related application work. These learning experiences frequently comprise required coursework and academic credit is granted to participants.

***Conference Events***

Another area of widespread experimentation in conferences relates to the invention of new types of events. Conference directors who experiment with developing new events do so cautiously because of the investment of most organizations that sponsor conferences in continuing what is important in the tradition. Following is a discussion of both the traditional events and those which have entered use in the recent past. This list is probably not exhaustive – some conference director out there is undoubtedly experimenting as we write!

**Conference Opening (CO)**. In this initial event, the staff and members meet each other as groups. The conference director states the task of the conference, gives some background information, and outlines the structure of the events. Lately some directors

have transformed the Opening into a "joining" event in which members and staff are invited to state their reasons for being at the conference. This approach is controversial because it implies to some a "warming up" of the relations between staff and members which may weaken the tranferential qualities of the relations and thereby deprive members of potential learning.

**Small Study Group (SG)**. Eight to twelve members are assigned to a group, usually mixed and balanced for maximum heterogeneity. A particular consultant works with the study group to facilitate its task of examining its own behavior in the here-and-now.

**Large Study Group (LG)**. All members of the conference (anywhere from 20 to 90 participants) meet together with the task of studying their own behavior in a situation in which face-to-face interaction is problematic or impossible. Two to four consultants, depending on the number of members, are assigned by the conference director to provide consultation to the Large Group's task, which, like the Small Study Group is to examine its own behavior in the here-and-now.

Figure 1. A Typical Design for a 5-Day Residential Conference

| **Time** | **Fri.** | **Sat.** | **Sun.** | **Mon.** | **Tues.** | **Wed.** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8:00 Breakfast | | | | | | |
| 9-10:30 | | SG | SG | SG | IEP | CD |
| 10:30 Coffee | | | | | | |
| 11:00-12:30 | | LG | LG | LG | SG | AG/CE |
| 12:45 Lunch | | | | | | |
| 2:30-4:00 | 2:00 CO SG | IG | IE | IE | --- | |
| 4:00 Break | | | | | | |
| 4:30-6:30 | LG | IG | IE | IE | LG | |
| 6:45 | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dinner | | | | | | |
| 8:00-9:30 | SG | SG | RAG | --- | AG* | |

CO = Conference Opening
SG = Small Study Group
LG = Large Study Group
IG = Intergroup Event
IE = Institutional Event
AG/CE = Application Group and Conference Evaluation
RAG = Role Analysis Group
IEP = Institutional Event Plenary
AG = Application Group
CD = Conference Discussion
--- = Free Period

*After this Application Group session, there would typically be a social event in which staff and members would meet each other to socialize. This has become a useful element of the "export" phase of the conference because it assists members to let go of some of the transferential dynamics they may have been participating in.

**Intergroup Event (IG**). After the director's opening description of the task and the format of the event, members are free to form groups of their own choosing. The task of the event is to study relationships as they happen between and among groups. In order to provide consultation for the intergroup task, staff members are assigned to specific sectors, or rooms**,** where members may choose to meet and receive consultation to their work.

**Institutional Event (IE)**. This event also begins with a description of the event by the director. Members are again free to form groups as they wish. However, the staff is not assigned to specific member workspaces; instead, the staff members meet as a group themselves, in public, so that group members can observe their functioning if they wish. Staff members are available on request to consult to single groups and to intergroup meetings, if consultation is desired, and representatives of groups are invited to interact with the staff group.

**Role Analysis Group (RAG**). The Role Analysis Group is a non-experientially based session that offers members an opportunity to reflect, with the assistance of one or more consultants, on the role(s) each has taken so far in the conference. It generally allows them an opportunity to think about how they would like to apply what they have learned in the conference to their continuing participation.

**Institutional Event Plenary (IEP)**. The IEP offers an opportunity for members and staff to examine what happened during the IG and IE sessions to see whether they can understand the emergent institutional dynamics. It is a non-experiential session.

**Application Group (AG)**. Small clusters of members are assigned to these groups on the basis of similar back-home responsibilities or interests. The task of the Application Group is twofold: to further articulate and work toward understanding unresolved conference issues; and to consider the relevance of what was learned at the conference to the members' back-home situations. These sessions, like the Role Analysis Group, are

designed to be reflective rather than experiential. Each group has one or more assigned consultant(s).

**Conference Discussion (CD)**. This event, which occurs toward the end of the conference, provides an opportunity for all members and staff to discuss the events of the conference and to begin to make meaning out of their experiences together. One focus often held by the staff is to understand the system of the conference as a whole; however, there is no attempt to provide closure or summary.

There have been many other kinds of conference events experimented with, especially within the rubric of the A.K. Rice National Conference. Two of these will be highlighted here.

**Praxis**. This experiential event designed by Gordon Lawrence is designed to offer members and staff an opportunity to examine what happens in a system where there is no established authority structure or system of roles. Members and staff alike work at constructing their authority and tasks without preconceived notions.

**Learning Track Application Group (LTAG)**. In an attempt to link conference and external role experience, one of the authors (Hayden) added this event to the A.K. Rice National Conference in 1998. In advance of the conference, those applying to attend are invited to pick the LTAG for role development in an area of interest to them. These have included leadership, organizational consultation and group relations consultation. LTAG members and appointed staff spend several sessions bringing external role experience into the conference for examination and development.

## The Consultant's Role

The work of the consultant in "here and now" sessions in a group relations conference is to fulfill a carefully defined role. The consultant consults only to the group, not to individual members of the group, and only within the time boundaries prescribed. Frequently, the consultant's role is a subject of much consternation among members. The consultant behaves as s/he does in the interest of assisting members to pursue the work task of the event in which they are involved. His/her objective is to facilitate the group's task to the exclusion of other concerns. The consultant does not engage in social niceties, advice-giving, nurturance, or direction, especially in the experiential conference events. In the reflective, or non-experiential, events, consultants may allow their personal styles to be more in evidence. This contrast often provides members with a rich opportunity to examine person/role boundaries as these relate to effective task achievement.

In the here and now sessions, the consultant performs his/her task by providing interventions for the group's consideration. In a theoretical sense, the consultant "takes" the group by attending to its basic assumption functioning and then reports his/her

observations back to the group. As Rice (1965) describes it, the consultant's job is "to confront the group, without affronting its members; to draw attention to group behavior and not to individual behavior, to point out how the group uses individuals to express its own emotions, how it exploits some members so that others can absolve themselves from the responsibility for such expression" (p. 102).

The consultant has only his/her experience, feelings, observations and training to guide him/her in the task. The consultant may not always be fully conscious of what is happening - at times s/he may share the panic, anxiety, and bewilderment of the group. However, the consultant consistently attempts to focus on what is happening in the group and to present observations in a way that increases the members' awareness of what the group is doing. Consultant interventions are of several varieties; a few are described here.

*Description.* The consultant may simply describe what s/he sees: that no male members have spoken for the last ten minutes, that the female members are seated opposite the male consultant, that certain words or phrases have become part of the group's language. Such descriptions -unalloyed feedback - call attention to the dynamic configurations of the group or to other observable data about the group.

*Process Observation.* In this type of intervention, the consultant may comment on participation patterns of activity, the development of norms, emotional expression, and other aspects of how the group is pursuing its work task and/or engaging in the survival task.

*Thematic Development*. Consultants who are attuned to the mythic, archetypal dynamics of the group may cast their interventions in terms of primitive aggression or sexuality that threatens to disrupt the group's work task. At times, the group may be re-creating or re-experiencing the primal-horde dynamics of incest or parricide or other symbolic events chronicled in mythology and fairy tales.

*Mondo*. In Zen practice, the teacher often responds to questions with abrupt, pithy remarks designed to produce "instant enlightenment," or *satori*, by calling attention to the obviousness or the absurdity of the question. Some consultants offer similar interventions, designed to shock the group into an immediate awareness of what is happening.

Consultants vary in style and emphasis. They sometimes unwittingly collude with the basic assumption activities of the groups whose examination they are trying to facilitate. Each one's presence in a role and as a representative of the conference management has high ambiguity for the membership; as Rice (1965, as quoted in Colman & Bexton, 1975, p. 74) points out, "the members inevitably project upon (the staff) their fantasies, fears and doubts about authority and its power." Exploration of the

members' projections has the potential to yield significant learnings regarding authority, power, and responsibility - learnings for both the staff and members. The role is frequently difficult; strict adherence to it is a hallmark of the Tavistock method. Much interest usually accrues to the social behavior of the consultants at conferences: do they make eye contact?, do they interrupt members who are speaking?, etc. Most Tavistock consultants develop a demeanor and approach over time that assists them to fill the role effectively. Members often want them to behave consistently, but in fact what is consistent is the pursuit of the work task of learning rather than a rote performance of ritual behavior. Individuals manage themselves in the consulting role differently which offers members much useful information to consider.

**The Member's Role**

Attending a group relations conference is a unique experience, even for participants who have "made the rounds" of all varieties of leadership or personal development training. The seemingly simple structure and the role behavior of the staff in a group relations conference - certainly less elaborate than most other group-centered training approaches - create immediate ambiguity for the first time member. One participant compared his involvement in the Tavistock method to "living inside a Rorschach inkblot for a week." The experience brings into sharp focus the kinds of issues often obscured by other training approaches that feature more personable facilitator styles. It is this sharp focus that makes the method invaluable for those who require an understanding of authority, group dynamics, and the inner workings of group life. If the Tavistock method often produces data overload and feelings of resentment, engulfment, pain, and depersonalization for the group member, it is because authority, power, responsibility, and leadership are difficult issues laden with multiple meanings and sometimes bitter memories from the past.

The member's role in group relations conferences is relatively open and without restrictions. At the Opening members are told they have the freedom to do whatever enhances their learning. The fact that most people rather quickly forget this invitation and begin to behave in ways they believe will comply with what they imagine the staff's expectations to be often makes for important learning. Members usually grapple with how the staff apply the term "work". The staff describes any activity that moves the group's understanding of its own behavior in the "here and now" along, as work. This concept is incongruent with most people's definition of work in which a tangible outcome other than learning is the goal.

Members' conference learning typically crosses a broad spectrum of organizational dynamics. That is why people often repeat attendance – no one conference is sufficient to contain all the potential experiences from which one can learn. A typical pattern for member learning is to begin in early conferences with increasing awareness of one's own use of authority and the roles one tends to take/get put into. As a person attends

additional conferences, the ability to "see" more in terms of group and system patterns usually emerges.

**Key Areas of Learning**

Some topics the Tavistock conference framework explores exceptionally well include authority, responsibility, boundaries, role, and large-group phenomena. A useful acronym that stands for several of these key concepts is BART: boundary, authority, role and task.

***Boundaries***

Boundaries are both physical and psychological. An individual's skin is a boundary that separates and individuates him or her from others. Internally and externally, various psychological "skins" separate reality and fantasy, thought and impulse, person and function, and one group from another. Boundaries – their types and permeability and the consequences of their absence - are frequent areas of focus in group relations events. Boundaries must be strong enough to maintain the integrity of what is contained inside, but also permeable enough to allow transactions between the inside and outside environments to occur. As Miller and Rice (1967, as quoted in Colman & Bexton, 1975) state, "An individual or a group may be seen as an open system, which exists and can exist only through processes of exchange with the environment…within our conceptual framework, the individual, the small group, and the larger group are seen as progressively more complex manifestations of a basic structural principle. Each can be described in terms of an internal world, an external environment, and a boundary function that controls transactions between what is inside and what is outside" (p. 52).

Boundaries of particular interest in a conference are between the individual and the group, between the members and the staff, between one member group and another, and between what happens in the conference and the outside world.

The group relations conference staff maintains strict boundaries in six different areas:

1. *Input Boundary*. The conference director regulates the membership of the conference by requiring members to go through an application and acceptance process.

2. *Task Boundary*. Each conference event has a specified work task.

3. *Role Boundary*. Staff consultants stay "in role" during the conference and are alert to attempts by the members to pull them out of role.

4. *Time Boundary*. All events start and end on time.

5. *Territory Boundary*. Each event takes place in a designated space.

6. *Export Boundary*. Application events are designed to prepare members to leave the conference and re-enter their "back home" contexts.

These boundaries and the staff's precise adherence to them protect the members from anxieties that could potentially destroy the work of the conference. As the members observe these boundaries and experience their reactions to them, they have the opportunity to learn about their own boundary maintenance and permeability and whether the boundaries established impede or enhance their work. Boundaries are critical for individuals and groups. A closed system, which refuses to transact with the environment and attempts to nourish itself, becomes frustrated and withdrawn and eventually dies. An open system promises creativity but raises the fear of overextension and loss of identity. Resolution of the dilemma requires a balance between withdrawal and fusion, a balance that requires clarity of perception. Over the last few years, there has been an interest in seeing boundaries more as regions than as strict lines between systems. The concept of region connotes a psychological space where people can negotiate as opposed to fighting to maintain territorial integrity.

***Authority***

Authority may be defined as the right to do work in service of the task. Consultants and members both have authority within their respective roles. Members frequently find themselves confused about their responsibility in terms of working on the work task in the context of the group. Part of this confusion may be attributed to the fact that the work task of a "study" group is a process one rather than being concerned with a tangible outcome (although this may also be an anti-work strategy).

Frequently members find themselves confused and anxious over the amount of their individual authority that needs to be handed over, or delegated, to other group members or to the consultant for the group to accomplish its task. Typically, group members take positions along a continuum that ranges from "I don't know what to do - I wish somebody else would take over" to "To hell with the group! I'm not going to go along with anyone else's ideas because I don't trust them." Delegated authority is often experienced as diminished power.

Authority has a formal and an informal aspect. In terms of formal authority, the conference director has delegated authority to the consultant to take up his/her role in the Small Study Group and to the member of a conference, who has been accepted, to take up a member role in the conference. In terms of informal authority, however, one brings one's own approach to each role, as well as being authorized by others in the group to take up the role in a certain way. Frequently, authority is vested in individuals because of age, gender, race, rank, education, and other less tangible personal attributes. The events of the conference provide a laboratory for the examination of this phenomenon. For example, in a group composed of health professionals, a physician may be implicitly

authorized to marshal the resources of a group, a nurse may be asked to take care of members who are suffering, while the oldest group member or a person of color may be set up to challenge the authority of the consultant. These normally unexamined transactions become the occasion for interventions from the consultant.

Hopefully "the work" occurs in service of the task. Group relations consultants distinguish a person who takes up authority either to contribute to the work task (a work leader) or to distract from the task (an anti-work leader). Personal authorization has an important impact on which form of leadership one enacts. The conference gives members a chance to reflect on what impedes and what enhances their self-authorization. For example, an African-American woman in a group may feel authorized because she identifies with the African-American consultant, whereas an Asian group member may feel de-authorized because there are no other Asians in the group.

It is precisely in an activity for which the task is specified but the means of accomplishment are to be determined by the members that authority issues surface. In everyday life, such issues remain obscured behind predetermined role relationships, custom, and assumptions about competence.

***Role***

A role is a center of individual activity that is distinguished from the activities of others in a system by a series of boundaries that delineate which person is responsible for which activity. In order for individuals to function within roles they must be authorized by others and by themselves to carry out each role's activities. Besides formal roles, members and staff in conferences experience taking up informal roles, which generally are the effect of both what one brings to the role and also what is implicitly wanted by other members. According to Eliott Jacques (1976), a role is like a knot in a net of social relationships. When the net is pulled on or moved, all roles experience a shift. This metaphor is useful for understanding that role relationships are never static but are in continual flux in relation to each other. Group relations conference work offers a uniquely safe context in which to experience and understand the organic elements of role.

Another group relations concept that relates to role is that of valence. Valence refers to a person's predisposition to take up particular kinds of roles in groups, often in relation to a group's basic assumption functioning. For example, a person who finds him/herself pulled to take on a role as the critic of innovation in groups may be someone whose valence is activated by group anxiety toward change. In a conference s/he may be the group member whom the others have to convince that taking action to leave the room and interact with other groups in an Institutional Event would be a worthwhile idea. In "real" life, this person's valence may be to take roles like policy analyst, quality assurance consultant, compliance officer, etc. *Flight/fight* basic assumption life might be the group context this person would feel most at home in. An interesting aspect of

valence is that it shifts over time and context, so to say that it is a perpetual aspect of one's identity would be to oversimplify.

Related to authority and role is the subject of *responsibility*. Because of the nature of the conference events, members have the opportunity to intensely experience the implications of accepting the responsibility for a particular role in the group. For example, a group member who, in real-life situations, is accustomed to challenging authority overtly may never have examined the consequences of that particular function, because the heat of battle has obscured them. Responsibility within a system is everywhere, if it is anywhere, but the implications of that truth are often outside the level of awareness.

***Task***

Task, in the group relations context, is the end toward which work is directed. In conference work learning is the goal, so the work task that most experiential conference events specify is for groups to "study their own behavior in the here and now". The task of the reflective sessions, like the Application Group and Conference Discussion is also learning, but these events use a reflective methodology – a "there and then" approach.

Beyond BART, there are two other areas of learning which are particularly accessible in a group relations conference: Organizational Structure and Large Group Phenomena.

***Organizational Structure***

In most group work, structure refers to the kinds of control, restraints, and selected emphases that define the learning environment. Control includes the group's objectives and the contract; restraints are exemplified by group ground rules; the selected emphases derive from the personality of the leader, his/her expectations and assumptions, the group theory s/he espouses, and also from the members and their expectations and assumptions about disclosure, competence, and likeability.

A structure can be minimal or it can be elaborate to a baroque degree; it can also be visible or invisible. Elaborate structures hinder the visible emergence of organic group processes, while minimal structures encourage their visibility. Explicit structures inspire high trust, while unspoken structures prompt feelings of manipulation. Although of vital importance to productive group functioning, structure and our dependence on it is rarely the object of consideration in a personal development training context, except for ground rules.

The group relations conference provides a highly visible but minimal structure. The time schedule, the staff roles, the theoretical perceptive about the group-as-a-whole, the arrangement of the chairs, constitute its basics. Beyond that, the structure is provided by the members and their projections. The apprehension that frequently develops in the

conference is due, not to the staff's alleged authority and control, but rather to their absence: it is freedom that frightens. Literally anything can happen in a conference event, and the responsibility for allowing it to happen is shared by all.

The design of the conference permits a participant to examine the structure inside his/her own head; that is, to explore how individual perceptions and projections attempt to define and control external reality.

***Large Group Phenomena***

People are exposed to large-group phenomena all their lives. At movie theaters, athletic events, political rallies, school assemblies, lecture halls -wherever a large group of persons (one where people cannot easily work face-to-face) gathers to pursue a common task – large group phenomena exist. The experience of being a member of a large group is one of the most common and least understood experiences people have. Group relations conferences which include a Large Group event provide a unique opportunity to explore the experience that some participants describe in the following terms: "Like being at the center of a vortex of rage," "Being alternately overwhelmed with feelings of power and feeling drained and impotent," and "Losing myself and becoming nameless, faceless."

The work task of the Large Group event is the same as that of the Small Group: to study its own behavior in the here-and-now. The consultants attempt to facilitate that task by calling attention to group behavior. For example, members frequently attempt to change the seating arrangement set up by the consulting staff in an attempt to flee from the anxiety the Large Group experience creates in them and to express their fury at the staff for putting them in such a situation. Much time can be taken up with discussion about what would be a "better" arrangement. An appropriate intervention from a consultant might be to point out the avoidance aspects of this activity and the implicit challenge to the authority of the staff.

Possibly the greatest challenge facing a participant in the Large Group event is to experience and understand what happens to one's own personality boundaries in the face of forces so complex and numerous as to be only partially available for scrutiny.

## CONFERENCE EVALUATION

The measure of a conference's effectiveness lies in the level and usefulness of member learning. There are several activities within the A.K. Rice Institute and its regional Affiliates that attempt to measure this learning. Typically, members at a conference are provided with evaluation forms either at the end of the conference or shortly thereafter in which they are asked to rate the quality of the learning experiences they were offered at the conference. There is always space for anecdotal comments and for suggestions about

how to improve the learning opportunities. Some Affiliates actively pursue a program of research as well, in terms of what conditions create the most learning for members.

Given that the reason most people attend conferences is to understand what they can do to improve themselves and/or their "back home" organizations, much more evaluation work needs to focus on how conference learning affects members when they return to those organizations. Some Centers sponsor long-term, ongoing application seminars where conference members are invited to bring organizational case materials and receive consultation from trained Tavistock consultants, as well as each other, on how to solve their dilemmas. The assessment of conference member learning, in the long run, is most likely to be measurable in these kinds of contexts.

## CONCLUSION

This primer has attempted to describe the theoretical base from which group relations, or Tavistock, training methods are derived, as well as the objectives and structure of group relations conferences and some common concepts and potential areas for learning.

Although not exhaustive in its treatment, the chapter gives the reader who is planning to attend, or who has experienced a conference, some ideas that may serve as guideposts to begin or extend his/her learning. Those who are seriously interested will want to explore further in experiential work, theory, and particularly, application. The usefulness of group relations training, in common with that of other human relations training methods, cannot finally be described or evaluated on paper; the training must be experienced before its measure can be taken. Beyond the training lies the world of organizations outside the conference. It is imperative to the continued and enhanced value of group relations work to focus on the application of member and staff learning in those organizations. To ***see*** and not to act is to lose an opportunity to lead oneself and others toward more effective accomplishment of organizational goals with less brutality toward individuals.

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Several books on this list are of special value to readers who wish to deepen their understanding of the Tavistock method. More contemporary material may be found in this third group relations reader and on the various group relations websites on the Internet. Bion's classic work, "Experiences in Groups" (1961), is the major theoretical statement; Margaret Rioch's "The Work of Wilfred R. Bion on Groups" (1970) is an excellent summary of Bion's work and will prepare the reader for Bion's sometimes-difficult text. Miller and Rice's "Systems of Organization" (1967) describes open-systems theory and provides a discussion of task issues and boundary problems. "Learning for Leadership" (1965) is Rice's account of the historical and theoretical development of the group relation's conference. In "Group Relations Reader 1" (1975),

Colman and Bexton have collected many hard-to-find papers and excerpts; it is the best single source of information on the Tavistock method and its applications. "Group Relations Reader 2", (1985) edited by Colman and Geller provides an update in the same vein.

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## GROUP RELATIONS ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

A. K. Rice Institute (also known as AKRI) *for the Study of Social Systems* www.akriceinstitute.org

*Affiliates of the A. K. Rice Institute*

Center for the Study of Groups and Social Systems (CSGSS), Boston, MA

Chicago Center for the Study of Groups and Organizations (CCSGO), Chicago, IL

Grex, The West Coast Center, Berkeley, CA

The Midwest Group Relations Center, Cincinnati, OH

The New York Center, New York, NY

Philadelphia Center for Organizational Dynamics, Philadelphia, PA

The Texas Center, Houston, TX

The Washington-Baltimore Center, Washington, DC

**GROUP RELATIONS ORGANIZATIONS AROUND THE GLOBE**

Australia: AISA

Belgium: Fondation Internationale de l'Innovation Sociale

Denmark: Proces Aps

France: Forum Internationale de l'Innovation Sociale

Germany: MundO

Great Britain: The Grubb Institute

Great Britain: Tavistock Institute

Israel: The Israel Association for the Study of Group and Organizational Process

Israel: OFEK

Italy: ISMO

Mexico: Istituto Mexicano de Relaciones Grupales y Organizacionales

Netherlands: Group Relations Nederland

Norway: Norstig

South Africa: ISLA

Spain: Associacio per a la Innovacio Organitzativa i Social

Sweden: AGSLO