



**Group Relations
Conference Series
at Boston College**

A Group Relations Conference in the Tavistock Tradition

Hierarchies of the Collective:

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Mind

—
Body

—
Spirit
—

Boston College, Chestnut Hill | March 23-25, 2018

www.HierarchiesGRC.com

Register now at www.HierarchiesGRC.com/registration

A Group Relations Conference in the Tavistock Tradition sponsored by:



**BOSTON
COLLEGE | LAW**



**Group
Relations
International**



**BOSTON
COLLEGE** The Institute for the
Liberal Arts



Dear Prospective Member

In a world where the collective ways we construe truth and parse reality seem to divide the world further, effective leadership requires a more integrated approach to meaning making. Leadership for change requires knowing how to lead from the mind, body and spirit in the midst of confusion and chaos, and linking these ways of knowing together to navigate authentically, both above and below the surface, through the shifting prisms and shadows of our collective perspectives.

Hierarchies of the Collective: Mind, Body, and Spirit is a Group Relations Conference in the Tavistock tradition that provides experiential learning about the dynamics of authority, leadership, power, and justice as these dynamics rise, shift, and flow above and below the surface over the life of the conference. You will have opportunities to take different roles and learn how effective you and others are in exercising authority and leadership in a changing environment, and experience the impact your role-taking has on the development of organizational culture. Participants and staff together have an opportunity to study the implicit hierarchies of the collective mind, body, and spirit that assist and hinder how we collectively choose, organize, interpret, disseminate, create, and act using existing data.

Why this conference? Today, advances in science and technology enable us to live longer and more productive lives. But with the same advances, we are becoming a disembodied species, not too distant from cyborgs with our advancing technological appendages.

As complexity and options increase, our inherited reptile brain, default mode network, and survival instinct pull for the familiar, for homeostatic order and consistency. In this climate, the myths and shadow side of leadership find fertile soil.

Paradoxically, our digital age rushes us into the future and simultaneously hurls us into the murky mires of our past. We fall prey to our perseverative past and feel paralyzed by our uncertain future with fears of the unknown and the other's ability to harm, cheat, betray, subvert, degrade, and oppress us. With our nature and our nurture, how are we driven by our collective mind of culture, beliefs, and biases? Is there an interplay with our collective body, biology, basic laws of physics, and our ancestry? What is the spirit of all else that remains an unquantifiable mystery?

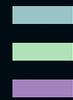
Together, we will explore and seek insight through conference experience. We will be accountable for the political impact that our collective actions and inactions have on systemic dynamics. If you are concerned about these issues, if you want to explore the light and shadow side of leadership, if you want to develop your own capacity to authorize yourself and others to negotiate meaning: Join us!

Suma Jacob, MD, PhD

Director

What can I learn from this conference?

- The dynamics of managing boundaries, authority, role, and task.
- How groups and individuals interpret, use, and work with information.
- The unconscious ways individuals and groups in organizations and systems are connected.
- How perceptions of social characteristics and identities can influence role-taking and the process of authorization.
- When the group propels me to be an agent of change and when the group or I resist change.
- How to manage myself in role in a constantly changing environment.
- The similarities and differences between authority, power, and leadership.
- How to work with competition, collaboration, conflict, coalition-building, and delegation.
- When the group mind, body, or spirit pulls me to act on its behalf and what occurs if I do something else.
- The connections and disconnections between the process of authorization and taking up authority.
- How to apply what I learn to situations back home.



Primary Task

The primary task of this conference is to study the conscious and unconscious development and exercise of authority, leadership, power, and justice as it occurs over the life of the conference.



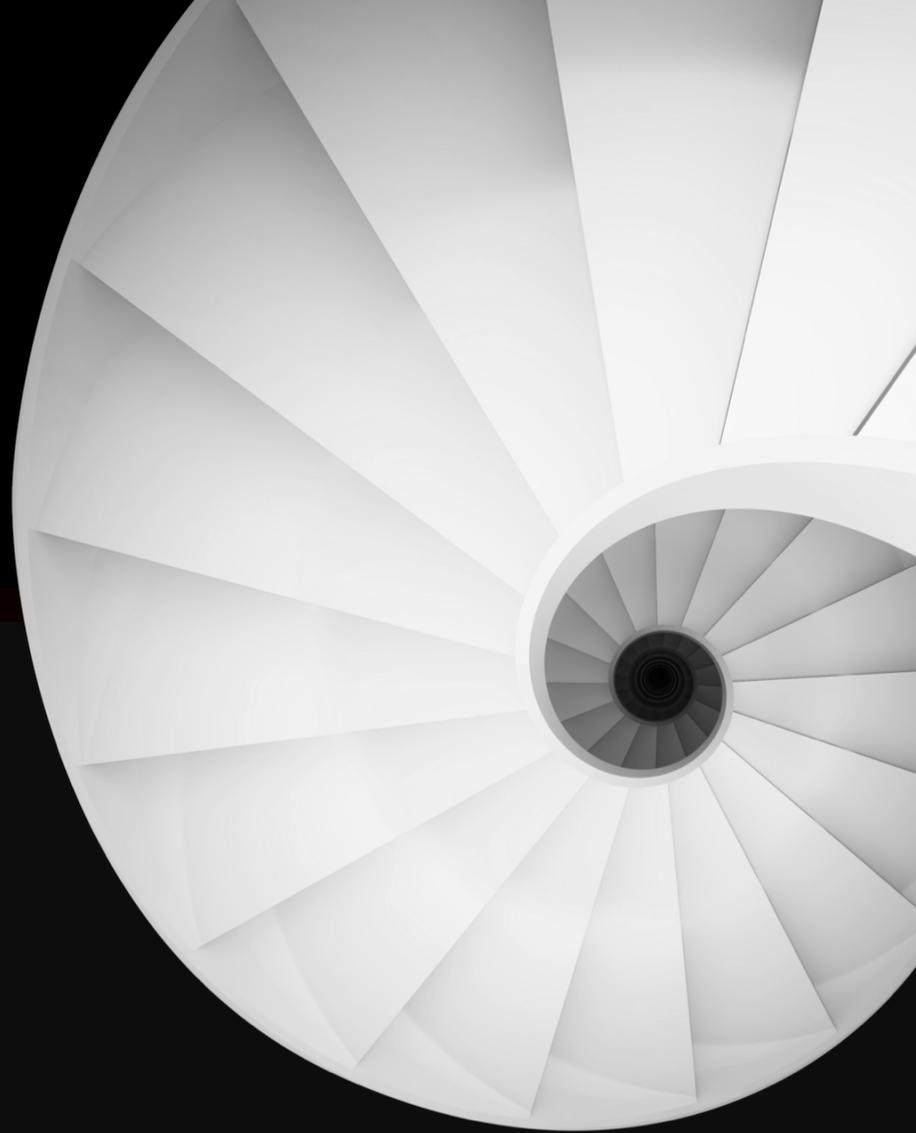
Purpose

The purpose of the conference is to enable participants to improve their leadership and organizational effectiveness by providing experiential opportunities to learn about the rational and irrational ways that organizations and groups function. This conference provides the opportunity to study the impact group processes have on the exercise of authority, particularly as it relates to the experience of power and justice.



Methodology

The conference is designed to be a temporary organization, or system, which serves as a microcosm of larger organizations, systems, and societies in the world and is the context for group-level analysis. In the conference system, learning is experiential and based on reflection-in-action, which means that there will be no presentations given by experts to direct and organize one's learning. Instead, learning occurs when participants focus on their experiences in the moment, and using their experience as evidence, dialogue with others to negotiate meaning and boundaries in real time. Participants will gain insight into the conscious and unconscious processes that influence their leadership style. This learning is done in the context of the evolving and changing culture of the conference system and through the inter-personal and inter-group relations that develop within the conference as an organization.



Consulting Training Track

A consulting training track will be offered at this conference for those interested in training related to group relations consulting. Participation in at least one group relations conference is required.

Those interested in applying for the training component should contact hierarchiesgrc@gmail.com for more information about the application process.



Learning Through Research

Systematically investigating aspects of conference experience facilitates multi-dimensional and multi-perspectivist discoveries about learning through change. In the current world, data may be collected about groups and individuals with or without explicit consent. In contrast, participants in this conference have the opportunity to voluntarily participate in pre- and post-conference surveys by signing an informed consent document.

Our research team and conference staff will follow the rules and ethics of confidentiality and refrain from disclosing personally identifying information in presentations or publications that interpret data about how we learn in groups. In addition, participants will have the option to receive direct individual feedback about their pre- and post-conference learning through their own survey results.

During the conference, Seth Harkins and Janice Wagner will be observing staff meetings and select events in the role of researcher. Tracy Wallach will do post-conference research, but during the conference she will be in a consulting role.



Conference Events

The conference is organized as a series of events that provide opportunities to learn through the examination of experience in a variety of social contexts. The events will begin and end promptly at the times designated. A schedule will be provided at registration. Conference events include:

Opening and Closing Plenaries

These sessions open and close the conference, providing an opportunity for members and staff to express their thoughts and feelings on crossing the boundary from the outside environment into the conference in the opening plenary, and from the conference back to the outside environment in the closing plenary.

Here and Now Small and Large Study Groups

Small study groups provide an opportunity to learn about dynamics in small groups that resemble the size of teams and committees. The small study group consists of no more than 12 members with one or two staff consultants. In contrast, large study groups provide an opportunity to study the systemic forces and dynamics that arise in large groups, such as groups in society where it is difficult or impossible to know or see every member face-to-face. A team of consultants will work with the large study group. The task of the small and large study groups is to study the conscious and unconscious dynamics of the group as they arise in the moment.

Institutional Event

The Institutional Event (IE) takes place during several sessions and provides an opportunity to study institutional forces that arise as different groups form and interact with each other. During the IE, members form their own groups and determine how they want to achieve their learning task. The primary task is to explore the relationships between groups within the conference system and in relation to the theme of the conference.



Conference Events

Continued:

Systems Navigation and Satellite Maps

During the conference, staff and members will have a space to illustrate experience and share emerging information. The task of the space is to explore the state of the conference system through creative expression. The purpose of the space is to access conscious and unconscious dynamics through different means and forms of collective communication.

Network of Dreams and Associations

Members and staff participate in this event. The task is to explore the state of the conference system through dreams and reflections. The purpose of the event is to access unconscious as well as conscious dynamics through shared images, associations, and sources of mind-body-spirit data for the system as a whole.

Role/Review/Application Group

The task of these groups is to provide members the opportunity to reflect on their experiences in conference events, and to begin to apply the learning to life outside the conference.



Staff

Staff design and manage the conference as a whole and take up consulting roles during conference events. As management, staff serve the primary task by managing the boundaries of conference events, particularly in relation to time, task, and territory. Staff do not manage the participants or their behavior, but instead collectively manage the boundary conditions that allow the participants freedom to engage the primary task as they choose and as they authorize themselves and each other to do.

As consultants, staff serve the primary task by linking their own experiences to the activities of the conference and offering working hypotheses and reflections that explore the unconscious aspects of the organizational behavior that is emerging. In these roles, staff are actively involved in the life of the conference.

Their interpretations focus on group level dynamics rather than on the individual, and on unconscious as well as conscious dynamics. Attempting to articulate unconscious group level dynamics is an unusual activity and may seem strange to those unfamiliar with this approach. The ways in which staff work are always open for examination. A final list of staff will be provided at registration.



Administration



Suma Jacob, MD, PhD
Director



Evangeline Sarda, JD
Associate Director



Tyler Bean, CPA
Associate Director of
Administration



**Amber Conley,
MS, MBA, MS**
Assistant Administrator



Consultants



**Justin Brogden,
JD**



**Frank Dwyer,
MA, MPA, MSt, MSW**



**Suma Jacob,
MD, PhD**



**Patrick Jean-Pierre,
PsyD**



**Kate Regan,
PhD**



**Evangeline Sarda,
JD**



**Tracy Wallach,
PhD, LICSW**



Researchers



**Seth Harkins,
EdD**



**Janice Wagner,
LICSW**



**Tracy Wallach,
PhD, LICSW**



Attendance

A diverse membership creates the possibility for rich learning. To that end, we welcome individuals who represent a cross section of the community who are interested in the study of authority, power, justice, and hierarchies of the collective mind, body, and spirit. The conference is designed to be a single integrated educational experience. Individuals who know in advance that they are unable to attend all sessions are discouraged from applying. Anyone who must leave for any reason is requested to inform the administration.

Special note: The conference is an educational endeavour and does not provide psychotherapy or sensitivity training. Although the experiential learning available can be stimulating and enriching, it can be emotionally demanding as well. Thus, applicants who are ill or experiencing significant personal difficulties should forgo participating at this time.



Conference Details

Date and Time

**Friday, March 23 to
Sunday, March 25**

| | |
|----------|-------------------|
| Friday | 3:30 pm – 9:00 pm |
| Saturday | 8:00 am – 7:30 pm |
| Sunday | 8:00 am – 6:00 pm |

Registration will take place 3:30-3:50 PM on **Friday, March 23** at Boston College.

Meals and Lodging

Light refreshments will be available at each break. Aside from a light dinner on Friday, March 23, meals are the responsibility of members. The conference is non-residential. Those who require assistance in securing overnight accommodations should contact HierarchiesGRC@gmail.com



Conference Fees

\$475

Basic Fee/
General Public

\$400

Public Interest Practitioner / Boston
College Staff / Part-Time Students*

\$350

Full-Time Students*

Early Bird Discount of \$75 if application and payment is received by February 15, 2018.

*Please provide a student ID picture with registration.

A limited number of partial scholarships are available on an individual basis to assist with financial challenges, based on need and on the overall enrollment of the conference.

Please contact HierarchiesGRC@gmail.com to inquire about scholarships/discounts early, before registration reaches capacity.

Send application and checks
(payable to "**Authority Workshop**") to:

Tyler Bean
EY LLP 200 Clarendon Street, Boston, MA 02116

Total Due: \$ _____



Application Form



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Hierarchies of the Collective:
Mind | Body | Spirit
Boston College, Chestnut Hill | March 23-25, 2018

*NAME: _____

*ORGANIZATION/AFFILIATION: _____

*TITLE/ROLE IN ORGANIZATION: _____

*CITY/STATE/COUNTRY OF ORGANIZATION: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

ARE YOU A STUDENT? YES NO IF YES, PART-TIME FULL-TIME

GENDER: _____ PREFERRED PRONOUNS: _____ RACE: _____

ETHNICITY: _____ AGE: _____

RELIGION/FAITH: _____ SEXUALITY: _____

DO YOU REQUIRE SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS? IF YES, PLEASE DESCRIBE:

OTHER WAYS THAT YOU SELF IDENTIFY/THE INTERSECTION OF IDENTITIES THAT
INFLUENCE WHO YOU ARE: _____

NAME OF CLOSE ASSOCIATES ATTENDING THIS WORKSHOP, IF ANY:

IF THERE IS ANYONE WITH WHOM YOU WOULD PREFER NOT TO BE IN A
SMALL STUDY GROUP, PLEASE STATE HERE. (ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT
GUARANTEE IT, WE WILL ATTEMPT TO ACCOMMODATE YOUR PREFERENCE).

*Indicates information that will be published to participants.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROFESSIONAL ROLE/WORK ROLE/PRIMARY ROLE:

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH TAVISTOCK/GROUP RELATIONS CONFERENCES OR OTHER EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING:

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO LEARN FROM THIS CONFERENCE?

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THIS CONFERENCE?

OTHER INFORMATION YOU WOULD LIKE US TO KNOW, INCLUDING ANY CONCERNS YOU HAVE:

I HAVE READ THE BROCHURE AND AGREE TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND HEREBY APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP TO THIS CONFERENCE. I UNDERSTAND THAT THROUGH MY APPLICATION AND SIGNATURE, I AUTHORIZE THE SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS TO CONDUCT THE CONFERENCE IN THE MANNER DESCRIBED IN THIS BROCHURE.

SIGNATURE OVER PRINTED NAME

DATE



WITHDRAWAL POLICY: REQUESTS TO WITHDRAW MUST BE SUBMITTED BY MARCH 2, 2018 TO RECEIVE A FULL REFUND.

REGISTRATION: REGISTRATION WILL CLOSE ON MARCH 16, 2018. A waitlist will be formed if registration capacity is exceeded.

Send application and checks
(payable to **"Authority Workshop"**) to:

Tyler Bean
EY LLP 200 Clarendon Street,
Boston, MA 02116



Application Continued

I have read all the conference details and hereby apply for membership to this conference. I understand that by completing and submitting this application, I authorize the sponsoring organizations to conduct the conference in the manner described in the brochure and on the site. I understand that Hierarchies of the Collective: Mind, Body, and Spirit is a group relations conference where attendance at all sessions is essential to learning and I affirm the intention to be present for the entire conference. I understand that the nature of group relations conferences involves high levels of direct and sometimes charged interactions with fellow participants that may be experienced as stressful. I have been advised NOT to attend this conference if I am experiencing a period of personal difficulty, if I become triggered by views different from my own, and/or I require people to refrain from adult language that I may consider offensive. I understand that registration is not complete until payment is made.

I agree with the terms and conditions stated above and my signature below confirms this.

SIGNATURE OVER PRINTED NAME

DATE



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