

# Authority, Leadership, Membership, and the Unconscious in a Time of Ambivalence and Interdependence



**Group Relations Conference**  
**Teachers College, Columbia University**  
**April 8 – 10, 2022**

Teachers College, Columbia University

**TEACHERS COLLEGE**  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations

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## Dear prospective member:

The past two and a half years have been marked by considerable change and confusion. From the COVID19 pandemic to social upheaval within the United States and around the world, our sense of normalcy and security has been upended. We've experienced loss, isolation, fear, and uncertainty. And yet, through technology, adaptation, resourcefulness, and resilience, we have also found new, utilitarian, and often meaningful and significant ways to connect and transform.

During this time, we've experienced false starts at returning to interpersonal and societal "normalcy." Many of us have longed to recover a previous existence, perhaps a fantasy, where we felt grounded, connected, and more sure of what was "real." Yet we remain in a transitional space awaiting whatever the new normal may be.

How do we show up in this transitional space? Indeed, do we show up at all? In what ways have we defaulted to leaving our video off – literally and metaphorically? How do we imagine competent authority when leaders cannot ensure our individual and collective wellbeing? What does responsible leadership look like when our social future is unknowable? What do we gain and risk when we trust and depend on one another? And, when we don't? Amidst unrelenting challenges, how do we authorize ourselves and each other to act when we must, to take up leadership, followership, and partnership? How do we work with energy and integrity on behalf of the myriad groups and organizations to which we belong?

This group relations conference (GRC) will offer conference participants many opportunities to examine these questions and more that emerge from the conference theme and from our collective work. Conference staff and members will engage in the shared work of exploring our ubiquitous unconscious group processes and dynamics as they evolve in the here-and-now of the weekend.

## Conference Directorate:

### **Jonathan Rust**

Director

### **Patricia Kummel**

Associate Director

### **Sasha Wells**

Administration Director

### **Maddie Neufeld**

Administration Associate

### **Justin Uzzle**

Administration Associate

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### Please note:

*The GRC is an experiential learning conference and it is designed for members to learn about group and organizational processes. Experiential learning can be powerful, illuminating and also tiring and sometimes stressful. Self-learning often also occurs in the GRC, but the conference is not meant to be a clinical or therapeutic offering. If you are currently undergoing significant stress or managing a difficult personal situation you should forego attendance at this time.*

## Conference Design and Role of Staff:

The conference is designed as a temporary institution that is organized in a sequence of group and inter-group interactions that provide opportunities for learning. Staff manage the conference boundaries, but they do not manage people. Lectures and didactic presentations by staff are not part of the design. The staff's consultations will focus primarily on group-level phenomena rather than on individuals' behavior.

## Primary Task:

*The primary task is to study the inter-personal, group-as-a-whole, inter-group, and organizational dynamics as they occur in the here-and-now of the conference*

## You will have an opportunity to learn:

- Conscious and unconscious factors that shape participation in groups
- What roles we take up in groups and why
- How our own behavior shifts when we assume leadership
- How we relate to authority
- How aspects of our social identity influence role and authority

## Location

Teachers College, Columbia University  
525 West 120<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10027

## Schedule

9:00 am – 4:45 pm ET	Friday, April 8, 2022
9:00 am – 5:30 pm ET	Saturday, April 9, 2022
9:00 am – 4:50 pm ET	Sunday, April 10, 2022

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## Conference Registration

Registration takes place on Friday from 8:25 to 8:55 am.  
There will be a reception on Sunday from 4:50 to 5:10 pm.

## Meals and Lodging

Light refreshments will be available during breaks. Continental breakfast will be offered on Saturday and Sunday beginning at 8:15 am. Meals for lunch and dinner each day are the responsibility of the members.

The conference is non-residential. Once Registered, recommendations for housing accommodations are provided upon request by contacting the administrative team at: [teacherscollegeGRC@gmail.com](mailto:teacherscollegeGRC@gmail.com).

## Registration

The first step is to complete this form: <https://forms.gle/KAeAniBw68xFKBEj9>. After filling out the form, you will be contacted on a first-come, first-served basis with information about how to register and submit payment. Conference registration is \$450, with modest discounts available for current students and for those working in the non-profit sector. Please note that spaces are limited; if you are not offered a spot in this GRC, you will be placed on a waitlist for the next available GRC.

For more information about Group Relations Conferences at Teachers College Click [Here](#).

For additional questions, please contact: [GroupRelationsConferences@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:GroupRelationsConferences@tc.columbia.edu).

## Teachers College's COVID19 Policies

The safety of the entire TC community continues to be a top priority. Individuals are expected to comply with all COVID policies in effect during the time of the conference. Currently these policies include: any individual accessing the TC campus must be fully vaccinated and boosted; as well adhere to the face coverings requirements by wearing a non-cloth mask, regardless of vaccination status.

## Additional Questions?

If you have questions, please email: [GroupRelationsConferences@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:GroupRelationsConferences@tc.columbia.edu)