

**The Group Unconscious:
A Synthesis Paper**

Alok Singh

"You've all been in rooms with highly intelligent people, only to suffer a group intelligence of close to zero" – Cliff Shaffran

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has" – Margaret Mead

Contents

Summary of Synthesis	pg. 4
Introduction	pg. 6
Structure of this paper	pg. 6
The contexts in which I'm writing	pg. 6
1. A Journey to Synthesis	pg. 8
From Thesis...	pg. 8
...through Practice...	pg. 9
... to Synthesis	pg. 10
2. Hypotheses about The Group Unconscious	pg. 12
Understanding the Group-as-a-Whole	pg. 12
Defining The Group Unconscious	pg. 13
Roles, Shadows and Conflict	pg. 17
Comparing Mobs with Synergistic Groups	pg. 20
Surfacing The Group Unconscious	pg. 23
A concluding hypothesis	pg. 24
3. Taking a Wider View	pg. 25
Where does The Group Unconscious fit in Social Theory?	pg. 25
Applicability in different contexts	pg. 26
Questions for further research and exploration	pg. 26
4. Implications for my practice	pg. 28
Methodologies for surfacing The Group Unconscious	pg. 28
The inner state of the intervener	pg. 30
My practice going Fearward	pg. 31
References	pg. 33

Summary of Synthesis

The primary way to help a group in generating Fundamental Solutions to the Messes that they face, is by facilitating the Group-as-a-Whole to become more aware of itself, through surfacing The Group Unconscious.

The most entrenched societal problems today are Messes. They contain Dynamic, Generative and Social complexity, and require Systemic, Emergent and Participatory approaches to generate Fundamental Solutions.

As a facilitator of such processes, I have found that, in practice, this work is about convening groups of people and creating the conditions for the group to generate Fundamental Solutions. While any particular group may contain representatives of certain organisations, movements, or interests, at a phenomenological level, they are simply a group of people who share an interest in resolving an entrenched problem.

Based on my own experiences with groups, together with my understanding of some of the literature that sheds light on group process, I have reached the following hypotheses:

1. The Group-as-a-whole is of a different *order* to the Totality of its constituent parts – that is, the individuals who come together to form the group;
2. A large part of any group's experience of itself is unconscious;
3. The Group Unconscious is an integrated psychosomatic phenomenon, which is *distinct, but not separate*, from the embodied experiences of the individuals in the Group – it exists inside and lives through the body;
4. Roles taken by individuals in a group are more *of the group* than *of the individual*;
5. Manifest Conflicts that are given *airtime* in the Conscious realm of group discussion, are ripe for deeper work on the Underlying Issues which reside in The Group Unconscious;
6. Mobs and Synergistic Groups can both achieve 'more than the sum of their parts', but are very different in character. Mobs are characterised by *Deindividuation* while Synergistic Groups are characterised by *Individuation*;
7. Accessing Presentational Knowledge is the key way of surfacing The Group Unconscious – this usually requires more than conversational process – visual, body-centric or nature-based processes are needed.

Taken together, these seven hypotheses convey my current conceptual understanding of The Group Unconscious. The implication for my work is that the primary way in which I can facilitate any group's capacity to generate Fundamental Solutions, is by helping the group-as-a-whole to become more aware of itself, through surfacing The Group Unconscious, and this means making use of visual, body-centric and nature-based processes.

The Group Unconscious is currently present in only the margins of social theory, and is best situated with Post-Structuralism, Group Analytical Psychology and Process Orientated Psychology. It may also be, in the form I've started to articulate here, an original contribution to social theory. However, this claim needs much theoretical verification, as do all the hypotheses for their practical applicability and relevance.

Finally, there are three key implications for my future practice. The first is that I need to use, and develop my skills in using, group process methodologies that include ways of accessing presentational knowing; the U-Process, Constellations and Deep Democracy are three such methodologies. The second is that I need to embody the principles of these methodologies in order to understand how to use them in different contexts. And thirdly, I need to further develop my self-awareness, centeredness and neutrality, as the primary inner capacities for this work.

Introduction

Why do some groups achieve breakthrough solutions, while other groups disappoint with weak, half-hearted compromises? What is going on when a group of people come together with a firm intention to resolve a pressing problem, but instead get caught up in a vortex of circling conflicts? How is it that another group in similar circumstances can generate a solution that none of the participants had considered prior to coming together, and in doing so, create bonds of trust and genuine commitment to action? What is happening when a set of individuals who are each kind, moral and humane in themselves, collectively form a mob that goes on a murderous rampage, be it in Kigali, Srebrenica or Darfur?

In my work towards social change, which involves convening stakeholders to collectively resolve stuck problems, these questions become incredibly important. I've found that understanding the dynamics of groups, and how to facilitate them towards creativity, synergy and generation is the key to helping resolve entrenched societal problems.

In writing this paper, I'm seeking to provide some insight into these questions by honing in on the dynamics of 'The Group Unconscious'. I am capturing a still image of my living inquiry (Marshall, 1998). The tentative hypotheses that I present here will be a point of departure for my future action-research.

Structure of this paper

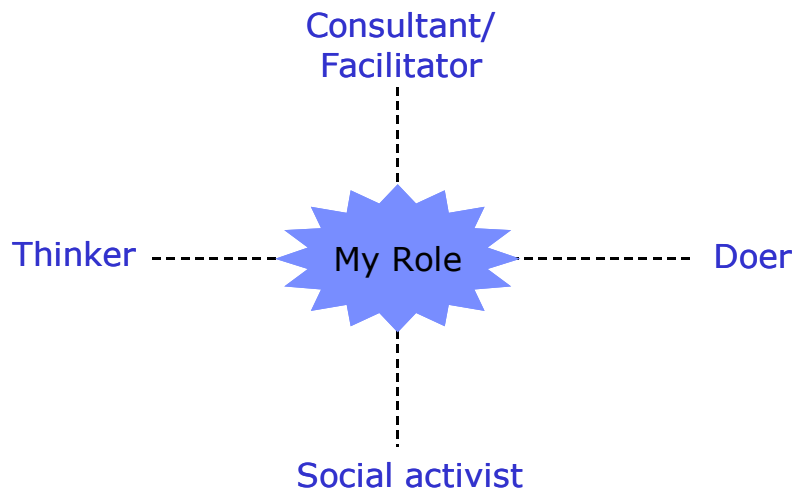
To complete this Introduction, I explain, below, the contexts in which this living inquiry and this writing are taking place. In Section 1, I give an overview of my journey to the synthesis I present in this paper. In Section 2, I lay out my core arguments in the form of hypotheses about The Group Unconscious. In Section 3, I briefly explore where The Group Unconscious fits in social theory, consider its applicability in different contexts, and detail areas for further research. In Section 4, I consider the implications for my future practice, in terms of methodologies, inner capacities and areas of work.

The contexts in which I'm writing

In the immediate instance, I am writing this paper as the final submission for the fifteen-month MA programme in 'Participation, Development and Social Change', which I'm

undertaking at the Institute of Development Studies in Brighton, UK. The programme has been structured in three parts, with an action-learning emphasis. In Part I, I developed a thesis, articulating a conceptual base for my future work. In Part II, I dived into practice in the world, with the conceptual base of the thesis serving as a platform. In Part III, I have been updating my conceptual understanding by integrating knowledge from the first two parts, culminating in this paper.

Beyond the immediacy of the MA programme, the context of this paper is my own life journey and living inquiry into the nature of my work and my role. In the course of this MA programme, I've come to understand my role as being composed of four dimensions: as a facilitator and organisational development consultant, where I am a neutral helper and intervene only on invitation; as a social activist, driven by societal injustices that I perceive; as a thinker, whose work is concept-led; and as a doer, whose work is context-led. I have come to see these countervailing roles as assets that give me depth as a social practitioner.



I intend to take the insights and questions from this paper into my work in the world, as a basis for intervention, holding them lightly and testing out the hypotheses through my practice.

1. A Journey to Synthesis

In this section I give an overview of my journey to the synthesis I present in this paper.

From Thesis...

July 7th, 2005. As I write this paper, a series of explosions are detonated in central London. The city comes to a standstill and is shifted dramatically from the previous day's euphoria of having won the bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games. As details of the number of casualties come through on the BBC news, Tony Blair speaks at a podium in Gleneagles, flanked by the heads of government of the G8 countries, and of India, China, Mexico, South Africa and Brazil, all looking stiff and solemn.

I feel more shocked than I thought I would be – after all, this has had a sense of inevitability to it, as the news commentators readily attest. But the actuality of it is hitting me hard, through the haziness of the theatrical spectacle that is on view. I condemn these acts and I feel sympathy for those who have lost their lives and been injured and their families and all the families who have worried even for a minute today about whether their loved ones in London are okay. I feel the ripple of that shock and pain and concern going through me – it is alive, it is fluid, it is flowing.

And then there is 'the other part of me' that wants to scream: this act is merely a symptom of the problem; it is not the problem itself. This must be understood; this must be stated in the same breath that I and we condemn these attacks. Can our society and the political leaders standing solemnly at Gleneagles hold this truth, this complexity? Or will they and we seek to frame it as a simple problem, and search for the corresponding simple solution?

In articulating a thesis in Part I of my MA programme, I focussed on the nature and approach to entrenched societal problems, which tend to take the form of 'Messes' (Ackoff, 1974, as cited by Chapman, 2002: 26). Such problems,

“are tough because they are complex in three ways. They are dynamically complex, which means that cause and effect are far apart in space and time, and so are hard to grasp from firsthand experience. They are generatively complex, which means that they are unfolding in unfamiliar and unpredictable ways. And they are socially complex, which means that the people involved see things very differently, and so the problems become polarized and stuck.” (Kahane, 2004: 1-2)

All too often such problems are approached with a reductionist mindset. There tends to be imposition of highly planned, linear solutions, which have been formulated by a small group of distant experts. Such approaches simply do not work for Messes (Ormerod, 2005). Sometimes, they appear to work for a while, but then generate ‘higher-order problems’ (Hassan, 2004a).

The alternative is to approach these problems in a systemic, emergent and participatory way, and thereby create ‘Fundamental Solutions’ (Senge et al, 2004: 210). Taking a systemic approach means looking beyond the immediate symptoms, understanding the root causes of problems, and then addressing those root causes – keeping in mind that these may reside in the relationships in the system rather than in any constituent part. Taking an emergent approach means letting go of what we know to have worked before, paying attention to the specific context and details, and then formulating and taking only the immediate next step; and then constantly repeating this process. Taking a participatory approach means involving all the stakeholders who are part of the problem in creating and implementing solutions.

... through Practice...

I'm remembering back to the Carbon Habits conference in Newbury, the morning of the October 1st, 2004, when there was an open conversation with the whole group... I am watching the group, doing all I can to pay attention, sense, and understand – to simply be with the energy. It's an unusual thing to have a single conversation with sixty people in a room together. It's unusual because most of the time it doesn't work. Here, it is fighting to work; there are some sparks of energy in a stew of dullness. It's as though we are collectively just about getting the car started... and... oh no, it has stalled again. Something wells up in me. I'm noticing how the conversation keeps leaving the room, how at regular points different people keep citing that someone else outside the room needs to do something, and the energy almost visibly leaves the room. The sense has filled me - I'm overflowing. I speak. I speak and share my sense, my observation. And I make a suggestion. I suggest that we take the remainder of the time we've got to focus first-and-foremost on what the people who are sitting in the room right now can do, and that way we can achieve more. There is a silence. Someone says they agree. And the conversation moves on... Later one of my colleagues thanks me for my intervention. He thinks it made a big difference, and says he's impressed by how deeply I observe and sense the energy of groups. I enjoy the complement with a little surprise. I've received similar praise before, and I still don't really understand what it means.

My practice, in Part II of the MA programme, has focussed on taking these 'new ways of thinking about change' into work with organisations committed to social betterment. The significance that this work holds for me, is grounded in the belief that, the process of creating change in organisations that are devoted to social justice is, in practice, creating change in approaches to social change itself.

I have engaged in this work through specific projects, in the role of an external change consultant or facilitator. This work has included:

- bringing a focus on employee involvement and behavioural change to the work of The Carbon Trust, a government funded body that engages UK industry to reduce its energy consumption and carbon footprint;
- facilitating the integration of services provided to children with autism in the London borough of Southwark, and, simultaneously, the creation of a parents council to provide constructive feedback to the service providers;
- designing, running and documenting a multi-stakeholder evaluation of a corporate community investment project initiated by BSkyB.

... to Synthesis

June 27th, 2005. What I now see is that the core of my work, all of my work, is interaction with and in groups. I work with groups. If I am to look at my experience as it is, without the lenses of particular theories and conceptual constructs of systems, organisations and change, then I need to pay attention at this most basic phenomenological level to my experiences, my observations, my feelings, my thoughts and 'the events' in working with groups.

Digging deeper, I notice that the quality of interaction in the groups with which I've worked has varied with the degree to which the group has become conscious of itself. What I particularly notice is that breakthroughs in the depth of conversation happen when the group becomes more conscious of itself in the process of conversation itself. And my role, whether explicitly stated or not, is often to help a particular group overcome some sort of 'stuckness'; this is an incredibly important finding! The implication is that my primary work is to facilitate the group in becoming more aware of itself, to bring The Group Unconscious 'above the waterline' into the conscious domain - this is my primary work, even though there may be a shared assumption that I am working with a particular content-directed process.

In synthesising knowledge and experiences from the first two parts of the MA programme into an updated conceptual base, I have stumbled into territory that I had not foreseen. In recognising that working with groups is the core facet of all my work, I have come to see the potential power of the phenomenon and concept of The Group Unconscious – and feel impelled to explore it further.

This term, ‘The Group Unconscious’, first came to me via an experiential training course in Deep Democracy (Mindell, 1992; Wajzman-Lewis, nd). The experiences of that training, and also of learning about Constellations process (Hellinger, 1998) have given me much food-for-thought on what is happening at an underlying level in groups. With Constellations, I have witnessed and experienced a whole system being brought into a room, with a group of people who are mostly strangers to that system. These ‘representations’ of systems have borne an uncanny resemblance to ‘the real thing’, with powerful feelings and emotions conjured up in the representatives – feelings that are ‘not their own’ and are also not consciously manufactured.

I have stayed with these experiences and the questions they have provoked. In Part III of my MA programme, a process of reflecting on these experiences has brought me to a sense that the dynamics of The Group Unconscious can provide a fitting and insightful explanation for the phenomena I’ve encountered in Deep Democracy, Constellations and all my work with groups.

In the next section I present the understanding that I’ve reached, based on my own reflection and reading of some literature from the fields of psychology, sociology, organisational development and social change. I have not conducted a detailed review of the extensive literature on Groups; to fully situate, and justify, The Group Unconscious as a concept in the landscape of social theory, such a study would be needed. In this paper, I am more humbly offering a set of hypotheses about The Group Unconscious, which draw upon some of the relevant literature and speak from my own experiences.

2. Hypotheses about The Group Unconscious

In this section, I lay out my core arguments in the form of hypotheses about The Group Unconscious.

Understanding the Group-as-a-Whole

“Gestalt psychologists emphasized that the perception of form emerged from the relationships among the parts of the form, and in this process the parts might lose their former properties and take on new properties determined by the form of the whole pattern” – Bower & Hilgard (1981: 309)

The physicist Henri Bortoft (1996), in comparing ‘authentic and counterfeit wholes’, draws a distinction between ‘the Totality’ and ‘the Whole’. Bortoft says that in any natural or human phenomenon, the Whole is of a different *order* to the Parts, and is thereby not the same as the sum of the Parts, which is the Totality. There is an ‘essential irreducibility of the Whole’; while we can put Parts together, we cannot put together Wholes. “The Whole is not the Totality, but the Whole *emerges* most fully and completely through the Totality” (Bortoft, 1996: 8). As a social practitioner, I find that Bortoft – drawing on Goethe’s way of science – has gifted me a different way of seeing reality that is an alternative to the dominant hyper-rational, positivist, individualist and fundamentally fragmented way; this alternative view of reality has laid the ground for my emerging understanding of groups and group process.

Hypothesis 1: The Group-as-a-whole is of a different *order* to the Totality of its constituent parts – that is, the individuals who come together to form the group

Brian Nichol (nd) spells out how Bortoft’s theory applies to groups, noticing that individual group members “develop relationships not only with one another but also to the group-as-a-whole”; anecdotally, this manifests in the way that, at the end of some group processes, individuals in the room experience a sense of loss – it is the group-as-a-whole whose loss is being felt. Each individual in a group has a relationship with the group-as-a-whole, which is an entity of a different *order* to the parts of the group – that is, the individuals who are in the group. As Didier Anzieu (1984: 249) says, “as soon as a group is ‘formed’, it ceases to be an agglomeration of individuals and becomes a projection” (Anzieu, 1984: 249). Angela Molnos (1998) comments that this group-as-a-whole is “a reality that is experienced first, before the individual”. She cites research by Sigmund Foulkes (1975), who postulated that this primacy

of the group-as-a-whole in the individual's experience of the group, is due to there being a social unconscious that precedes the emergence of individual consciousness.

One implication of this phenomena of the group-as-a-whole, for how I see and do my work with groups, is that it is no longer sufficient to think of the sum of the individuals' traits adding up to the group trait. And then, it is insufficient to attribute any particular individual's behaviour to only their personal positioning and psychological tendencies.

In reflecting on my work with groups, I have noticed that this entity of the group-as-a-whole is rarely acknowledged by group members. Indeed, when some aspect of the group-as-a-whole does clearly manifest in experience, such as the feeling of loss at the end of a group process, the tendency is to label it as irrational, or attribute to personal traits or needs. Why is this absence of attention to the group-as-a-whole so prevalent?

Defining The Group Unconscious

“At a group meeting, invisible influences appear in moods, motivations, group problems, inflations, depressions, illusions and dreams... These invisible influences have been described as shadow energies in physics, as the collective unconscious in Jungian psychology, and as a morphic field in Rupert Sheldrake's concept of the universe” – Arnold Mindell (1992: 22-23)

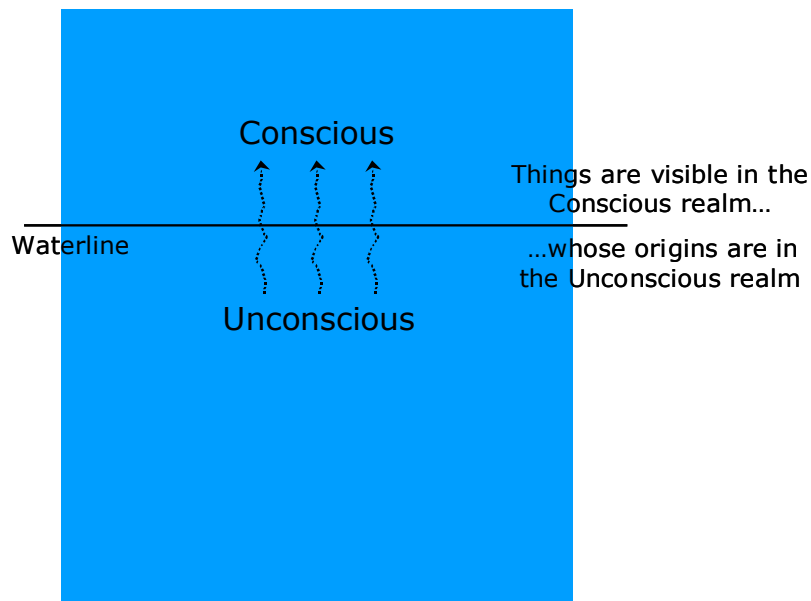
Psychologists frequently evoke the metaphor of an iceberg to represent the realms of the conscious and the unconscious in human experience. Just as only 10% of an iceberg is visible above the surface of water, and 90% is submerged, the suggestion is that the same can apply to human experience: only a small fraction of our experience is conscious.

Mindell (1992: 21) has applied this metaphor to groups and organisations, as illustrated overleaf, saying that there are manifest experiences and occurrences that are visible 'above the waterline' in the conscious realm, which originate from something that lives 'below the waterline' in the unconscious realm. In doing so, he provides a response to the question of why the group-as-whole goes unacknowledged: because the experience of 'it' is largely unconscious. It is in The Group Unconscious, and it is, by definition, outside the realm of conscious attention.

Hypothesis 2: A large part of any group's experience of itself is unconscious

In similar vein, Wilfred Bion (1961) talks of primary and secondary group processes. In a reversal of conventional viewing, the primary process is around an unconscious 'basic assumption' shared by all group members, while the secondary

process is around the particular task that the group has consciously gathered to accomplish. Drawing out the importance of this unconscious aspect of the group-as-a-whole, Didier Anzieu (1984: 254) comments that this task “can only be accomplished when the group is unconsciously united on the level of primary processes” (Anzieu, 1984: 254).

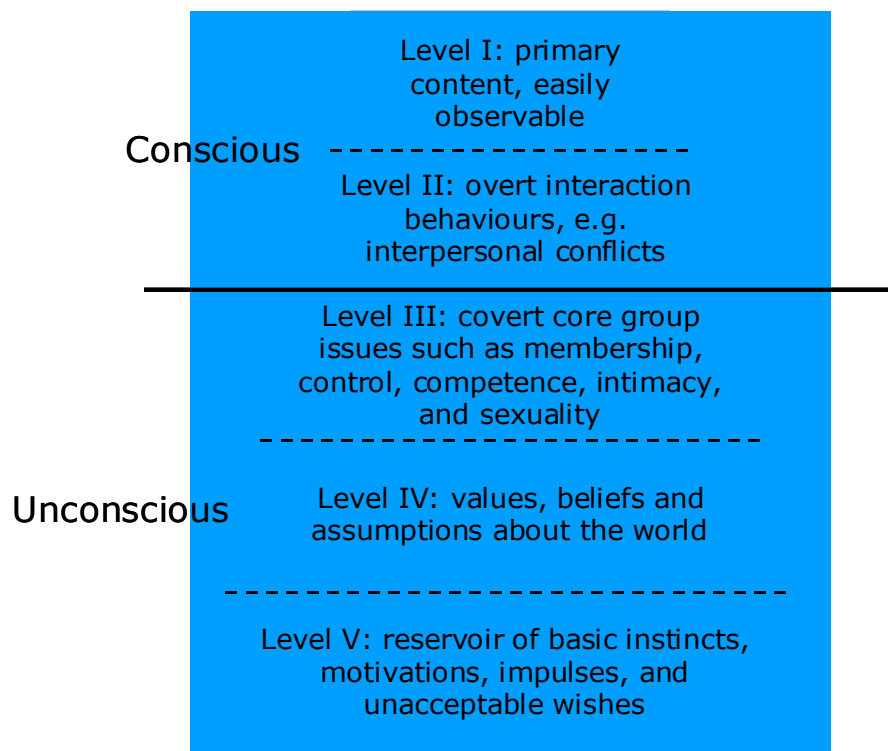


But what is ‘the Conscious’ and ‘the Unconscious’? The challenge with answering this question is where to start in several thousand years of philosophical inquiry! For the purpose of this paper, I’ll venture a definition of the Conscious realm in a Group setting: “that which is commonly and explicitly understood by all members of the group”. To illustrate, there may be a formal agenda for a meeting, which has been written down and communicated with all participants beforehand. In this sense there is a common and explicit understanding of the agenda. However, there may have also been some private conversations among some of the individuals coming to the meeting, which have generated positions or agenda items that those individuals wish to bring in covertly. While conscious for some individuals in the group, the awareness of this issue is unconscious for the group-as-a-whole, and is thus part of The Group Unconscious.

In my work with groups who are trying to find a way forward from a stuck problem, common and explicit understanding is important, because it provides a sounder basis for a group to move beyond current realities and generate future possibilities. However, this statement needs a caveat: the appropriate way of explicitly acknowledging something in a group will vary with the particular circumstances and context.

The Unconscious realm of group experience is a stew of many ingredients, including: invisible aspects of organisational culture; blind-spots in self-awareness of each individual in the group; the collective unconscious, in the Jungian sense of what we are born with and strive to become conscious of in the course of our lives; the ‘background’ which is what we don’t see while we are paying attention to the ‘foreground’ (as described in Gestalt theory); and the shadow of whatever intention the group holds, which tends to become stronger with the strength of the intention (Kaplan, 2002: 86).

Brendan Reddy (1995) articulates an ‘iceberg of group dynamics’, illustrated below, which has five levels of depth. Levels I and II are both visible, with Level I being visible to any passing observer, while Level II may need a longer period of contact to see clearly. Levels III and IV are usually not directly visible and need to be sensed from the manifest behaviour seen in Levels II and I. Level V is the deeper unconscious domain, which is only very rarely surfaced to consciousness, though it manifests in experiences at the higher levels all the time.



James Cumming (1999) suggests that: intervening in a group with attention to Levels II and III, means understanding how individuals are behaving in the group and then empowering and encouraging them to behave differently; whereas, intervening in a group with attention to Levels IV and V, means understanding how the group is making individuals behave in

certain ways, and helping the group members to become aware of these unconscious dynamics, to enable the group-as-a-whole to behave differently. It is this latter area of intervention in which I am most interested.

This is the stew of ingredients that constitutes The Group Unconscious. These ingredients also transform together in the cooking pot, blending to generate observable phenomena. These can include: judgements and irritations between individuals; sub-groups of allies; and the ‘elephants in the room’, which everyone knows but doesn’t talk about explicitly. More positively, they can also blend to create: *synchronicities*, whereby, through apparent coincidence, subsets of the group create complementary parts of a complete solution; *uncovering*, where aspects of the problem that nobody previously understood are seen; and *resonance*, where there is a palpable sense of energy vibrating through the group, and each member’s voice speaks the group mind.

Before diving into the details of how The Group Unconscious forms, evolves and affects interaction in actual group settings, I’d like to turn to a final aspect of its definition: where does it sit? My understanding is that The Group Unconscious is an integrated psychosomatic phenomenon, which simultaneously sits in the bodies of the individuals in a group and in the space of the group-as-a-whole. Freud’s swallowing-whole of mind-body duality creeps into the way the Unconscious is seen as a separate realm to the somatic experience of the individual; in practice, this is a fallacy (Bloom, 1997). The Group Unconscious is precisely also the embodied somatic experience of the individuals in the group. It does not exist *outside* of the group members’ bodies. Rather it lives *through* their bodies and is born of their bodies. There is not an entity of The Group Unconscious that is *separate* from the people in a space. But there is a *distinct* entity of The Group Unconscious. And so, The Group Unconscious *is distinct but not separate* from the embodied experiences of the individuals in the Group – it exists inside and lives through the body. I sense that this is what Rosemarie Anderson has in mind when she says,

Hypothesis 3: The Group Unconscious is an integrated psychosomatic phenomenon, which is *distinct, but not separate*, from the embodied experiences of the individuals in the Group – it exists inside and lives through the body.

“If I bow a string on a violin, the same string on another violin across the room will begin to resonate as well. Resonance is immediate and direct... in the not-so-distant future... our bodies will be more a field of resonance” (Anderson, 2001: 84, 98).

Roles, Shadows and Conflict

“There are a primary group identity and a secondary, disavowed, group identity in every group process... when groups forbid their disavowed parts they become incongruent, rigid and lifeless...in an incongruent group, the connections between sub-groups are tense and teamwork is inhibited” – Arnold Mindell (1992: 43, 114)

In one of his many fascinating experiments with groups, Wilfred Bion noted that, “the present leaders of this group are not in the room; they are the two absentees, who are felt not only to be contemptuous of the group, but also to be expressing that contempt in action” (Bion, 1961: 49). Bion worked with this particular group over several months, and noticed some patterns of behaviour. At times, the group would be desperate to find a leader; the tension eased as soon as one group member took on a leadership role. At other times, the group would be fixated by the interaction between two of its members. At other times, members either fought by being there and being vociferous, or took flight by either being absent or being present and maintaining silence. Bion attributed the shift between these three behavioural patterns, among all group members, to the group-as-a-whole operating at the unconscious primary process level, with one of three corresponding ‘Basic Assumptions’ that were shared by all the group members. He named these Basic Assumptions as: *Dependent*, *Pairing*, and *Fight-or-Flight* (Bion, 1961).

Arnold Mindell (1992) has articulated a ‘Role Theory’ that also explains Bion’s observations, with a different and more elaborate conceptual model. Mindell says that in any group there are unconscious Roles for particular points of view, ideas, positions or values. These are alive in the realm of the group-as-a-whole. At certain points, a particular individuals or sub-group are ‘occupied’ by a certain Role, and voice that Role in the group, on behalf of the group-as-a-whole. Other individuals or sub-groups may simultaneously disown themselves from the part of themselves that carries that Role. This creates a Polarity, strengthening the Role and the counter-Role. Over time, if this Polarisation process is not interrupted, conflict between the Role and counter-Role will escalate; the very fact that the origins of the conflict are deep in the unconscious realm of the group experience make it more entrenched. The disowning of a particular Role can also happen at the level of the group-as-a-whole, in which case the conditions are set-up for inter-

Hypothesis 4: Roles taken by individuals in a group are more *of the group* than *of the individual*

group conflict rather than intra-group conflict. I will return to this phenomenon when I look at ‘Mobs’ below.

How is it that Roles and counter-Roles can so easily form in all groups, and the unconscious game be played out, even in a group of strangers who come together for the first time and share little common context? Two Jungian concepts, of Archetype and Shadow, help to explain. Allan Kaplan says,

“[The] concept of archetype refers to the fact that all humans possess a similar psychic structuring process... such archetypes lie deep and are not invented by our consciousness – they are within the collective unconscious which is shared by us all... unless we bring deep underlying archetypes to consciousness, we remain in their sway – our actions are dominated by unconscious forces” (Kaplan, 2002: 57)

Similar psychic structuring means that any group of human beings share a fertile ground in which to cultivate Roles. Kaplan goes on to talk of the Shadow as an unconscious twin to conscious attention, which manifests in groups as a counterbalance to attention elsewhere. He explains that, “when we direct our energies in too focussed a fashion, a balance is lost; yet life strives towards balance” (Kaplan, 2002: 85). In my work, I have observed that when a group holds a strong intention to avoid getting into conflict, the real challenges they face are relegated to the shadows. Or, if individuals come into a space with an intention of engaging in ‘blamestorming’, then the shadows are filled with each person’s ownership of how they themselves are contributing to the problem, and may change to contribute to a resolution.

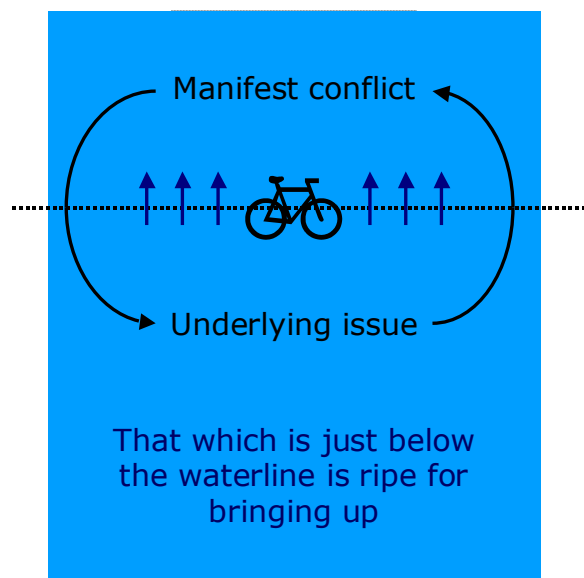
The implication of Role Theory is that individual behaviour in groups may be heavily constructed in the unconscious relationship between the individual and the group-as-a-whole. Concepts of socially constructed identity (see, for example, Merrill-Sands et al, 2000) are certainly one aspect of Role Theory, but do not encompass the whole of it. Whereas the former is concerned with how culture, history, society and political contexts shape the behaviour of any individual or group, the latter is concerned with how, in the immediate instance of a particular group of people, the group-as-a-whole shapes the behaviour of the individuals who constitute that group.

A second implication of Role Theory for my practice is that, by paying close attention to the behaviour of individual group members, I can learn a great deal about the nature and dynamics of the group-as-a-whole. Returning to Bortoft: “a whole becomes present within its parts... a part is a place for presenting of the whole” (Bortoft, 1996: 12).

A third implication is that entrenched conflicts, which often exist in Messes, are unconsciously constructed by the group-as-a-whole (or system-as-a-whole) as much as they are created by different players in the group or system. This is not to deny that there are ‘real’ issues of conflict – there are real positions and needs that stand counter to each other. It is to say, rather, that the entrenchedness of many group and systemic conflicts is less due to the nature of the manifest issues and more due to underlying issues, which need resolution for there to be a lasting resolution to the manifest conflict.

Given that the unconscious realm runs deep, there are many, many layers of underlying issues. How, then, do I decide as an intervener, where to focus attention and probe for underlying issues? Myrna Wajzman-Lewis (nd) suggests that the key is to watch for those conflicts that are given ‘air time’ in the conscious domain, and then ‘cycle’ – keep coming back, even if there has previously been a resolution. These conflicts are ready for deeper work.

Hypothesis 5: Manifest Conflicts that are given *airtime* in the Conscious realm of the group, are ripe for deeper work on Underlying Issues which reside in the Group Unconscious



In my experience working with groups and organisations, I have been startled by how much pain is endured to avoid acceptance of (what seems to me, as an outsider) a simple reality.

Kaplan explains that,

“even when there is pain, the organism does not want to get out of the established groove, the uncertainty is more scary than the current known pain... the organism forgoes consciousness in order to protect itself.” (Kaplan, 2002: 134)

Comparing Mobs with Synergistic Groups

July 9th, 2004. I am sitting in the basement of 14a, this beautiful stone-floored space that has hosted conversations for more than a century. Today's conversation is about the U-Process and started with a sharing of recent 'pivotal moments'. Somehow, in those first few moments, the boundaries to honesty fell away. I felt as though I dissolved into the space, the space of the group. Now, as different people speak, I hear only one voice. It is the voice of the group speaking through each of us in turn.

In the last few pages, on 'roles, shadows and conflict', I considered how dynamics of The Group Unconscious are responsible for generating problems in groups. I now turn my attention to the dynamics of The Group Unconscious in groups that manage to create breakthrough solutions to the Messes in which they are caught up. I am using the term 'Synergistic Groups' to name this desirable group state where there are high levels of creativity, synchronicity (Jaworski, 1996) and generative dialogue (Kahane, 2004). As a start to understanding Synergistic Groups, I first turn my attention to a fascinating and rather different entity, which has been much-explored in Group Analytical Psychology: The Mob.

'The Mob' can be seen as a crowd of people that is distinguished by high emotional charge, a lack of conformity to the regular social norms of the context, and engagement in aggressive, often violent activities. Rioting football fans are often cited as an example of Mobs. Of course, not all crowds, in football games or elsewhere, behave as Mobs; indeed many are not even cohesive groups (Brown, 1988: pp.10-21).

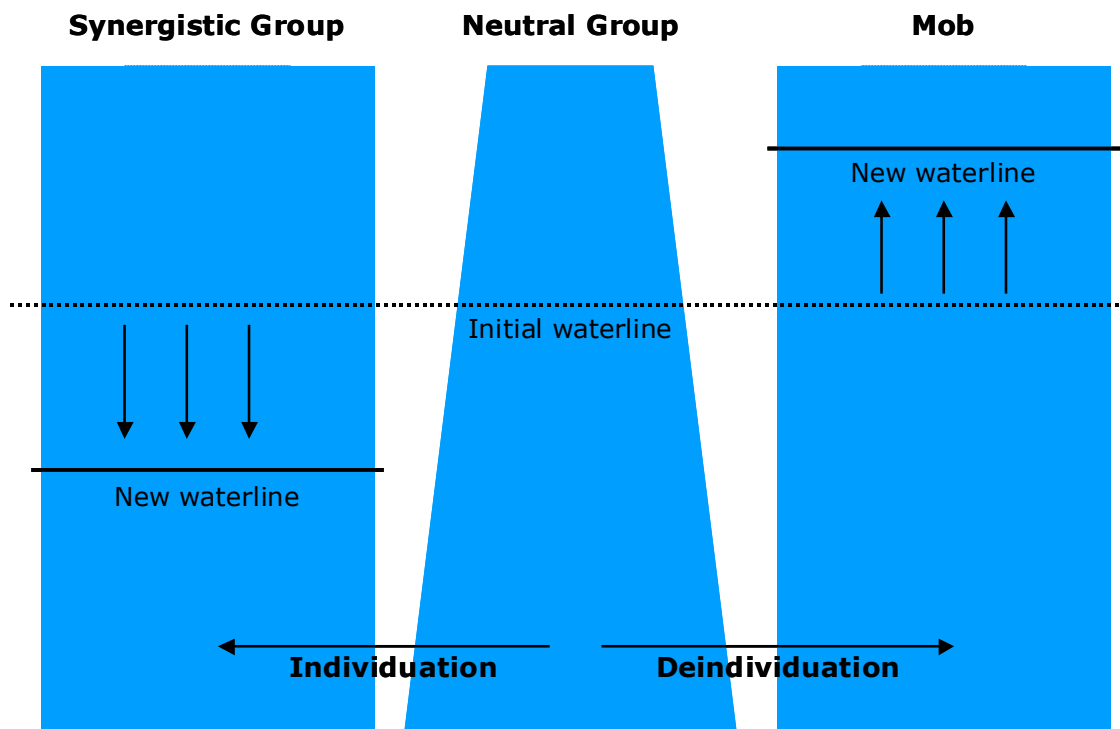
Mobs are interesting, because they appear to have a synergistic quality. The Mob does things which individuals on their own would not have done. In this sense, it 'achieves' far, far more than 'the sum of its parts'. What happens in a group of people that turns them into a Mob?

Diener (1980) argues that a process of 'Deindividuation' takes place in Mobs, whereby the individuals in the group completely lose their sense of personal identity. Diener further explains that individuals become anonymous, and are thereby less constrained by social norms. I am more convinced by Reicher, Levine & Gordijn's (1998) contrary elaboration of Deindividuation: that the individuals take on a new identity rather than become anonymous. The way I see it, group members' identities are entirely, and unconsciously, subsumed by the identity of the group-as-a-whole. Turner's (1987) theory of 'self-categorisation' helps me to draw together the process of Deindividuation with Mindell's thinking around disavowed

identities and polarisation. Turner says that groups can, in their desire to completely differentiate themselves from other groups who are seen as ‘not us’, develop fairly extreme positions as rigid beliefs. They then tend to latch on and place emphasis on any viewpoint that best represents what the group has in common while simultaneously distancing the group from other groups (Turner, 1987). Mindell (1992) argues that such groups talk with disdain about their disavowed parts in other groups, being oblivious at a conscious level to their disavowal of that part from themselves.

How does this dynamic of Mobs relate to and differ from what happens in a Synergistic Group? Clearly, while both types of group can be said to ‘achieve more than the sum of their parts’, the latter is more desirable than the former!

Carl Jung believed that human consciousness develops through a process of Individuation, whereby “consciousness is gradually, and painfully, drawn out of the transformation of the unconscious” (Kaplan, 2002: 198). Applying this to groups and group process, I draw the hypothesis that this process of Individuation is precisely what enables a group to become Synergistic, and that this process is in exactly the opposite direction to the process of Deindividuation that produces The Mob. The distinction is illustrated below, showing the changing waterline between conscious and unconscious experience of the group-as-a-whole.



In the process of Individuation the group-as-a-whole becomes more conscious of itself – more of the group experience becomes conscious. In the process of Deindividuation the group-as-a-whole becomes less conscious of itself – more of the group experience becomes unconscious. In both cases we can say that the group members ‘lose themselves in the group’. But the type of dissolution is of an utterly different quality in each case.

In Mobs, which develop through Deindividuation, group members bury a large part of their personal identity and replace it with the identity of the group-as-a-whole. Group members lose their moral compass, as the complexity of their many identities is submerged and denied. They identify strongly with the group-as-a-whole because they are each entirely occupied by one Role, which is a shallow, one-truth, conscious awareness of the group-as-a-whole. Such a unitary focus invites a strong shadow, and a strong Polarity develops with respect to other groups, resulting in taking up ever-more-extreme positions.

In Synergistic Groups, which develop through Individuation, group members become more aware of their complex identities, and start to take ownership of aspects of their identity that they have previously disavowed. They are each able to hold multiple Roles, ultimately all the roles that exist in the group-as-a-whole, and thereby they are each able to listen to one another at an incredibly deep level. They identify strongly with the group-as-a-whole because they are able to hold this plurality of Roles within themselves. Since a breadth of focus is maintained, shadows are small and little polarity develops; the shadows are noticed and invited in.

Mobs and the Synergistic Groups are both rare occurrences; they can be seen as two extreme ends of a spectrum of how a group can develop. For my work with entrenched problems, the need for developing synergistic qualities in the group of people who are part of the problem, is crucial. This can be achieved through a process of Individuation for the group-as-a-whole, which means surfacing The Group Unconscious; this is where I now turn my attention.

Hypothesis 6: Mobs and Synergistic Groups can both achieve more than the ‘sum of their parts’, but are very different in character. Mobs are characterised by *Deindividuation* while Synergistic Groups are characterised by *Individuation*

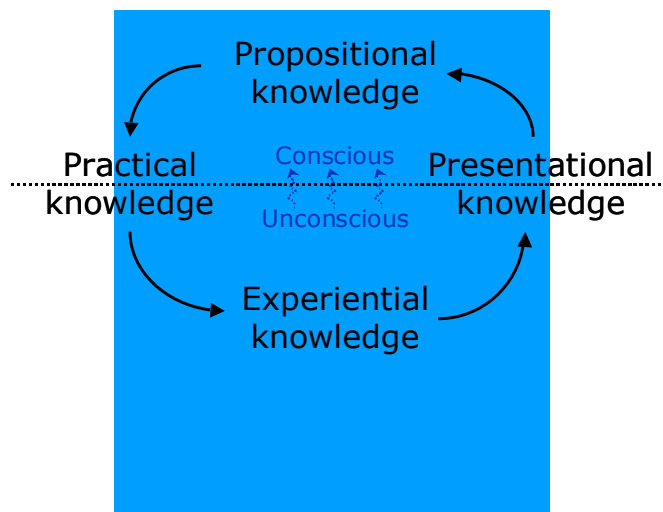
Surfacing The Group Unconscious

May 25th, 2005. It's nearing the close of the second Reflective Practice seminar in this third part of my MA programme. We are retaking our seats to see the theatrical presentations we have come up with in our triads. The session has so far been electric. I have felt fully present and felt the full presence of others through a mixture of silence, storytelling and visioning. In the latest exercise, we have been telling stories about our own experiences of the MA group and preparing brief theatrical skits as a report back for the rest of our group. The first triad comes up. The narrator tells us that this is a sausage factory, pointing to the factory foreman and the worker... A couple of minutes later the sketch is over. But its memory lingers. Something has been surfaced, without being said. Something has shifted, without being moved. We can all feel it.

In my work with groups, I have noticed that key 'shifts', where the group-as-a-whole transcends its stuckness around a particular problem, rarely happen through exclusive use of explicit, verbal conversation. They tend to happen through processes that include at least an element of visual, body-centric, nature-based practices, or, a combination of these.

Brian Nichol's view of The Group Unconscious as a channel for coded communication in the group, helps to explain why this is the case. Nichol (nd) suggests that this channel runs parallel to the explicit, verbal channel of communication that is taking place, and bypasses our consciousness. In this channel, "certain symbols and figures are embedded in the group's conversation and register at a pre-conscious or unconscious level in group members."

In Heron's (1996) model of 'extended epistemology' this type of knowledge, communicated through figures and symbols, is termed as being 'presentational'. As depicted below, Presentational Knowledge sits on the waterline of the conscious and unconscious domains.



Conveying Presentational knowing in a group is the primary way of tapping into that which sits just below the waterline and bringing it above the waterline, that is, surfacing The Group Unconscious. And since Presentational knowledge can, by definition, only be conveyed in non-propositional form, it follows that there is a need for visual, body-centric or nature-based processes. Sue Soal draws out the implications this has for the role of a group facilitator:

“...there is a stream of consciousness that underlies any process. The task of the facilitator... is to tap into that stream of consciousness, the particular meaning that is lying there at an unconscious level, and to help make it conscious for and with the participants” (Soal, 2004: 57).

Hypothesis 7: Accessing Presentational Knowledge is the key way of surfacing The Group Unconscious – this usually requires more than conversational process – visual, body-centric or nature-based processes are needed

A concluding hypothesis

“Our task is to help unfold what has become enfolded within; to enable to emerge what has become submerged” – Sue Soal (2004: 20)

Taken together, the seven hypotheses I have outlined in this section, convey my current conceptual understanding of The Group Unconscious. They lead me to a concluding hypothesis: that the degree to which a group becomes Synergistic depends on the extent to which The Group Unconscious has been surfaced; for groups that are intending to create breakthrough solutions to entrenched problems, it is the key determinant of success. The implication of this final hypothesis for my work, is that the primary way in which I can facilitate any group’s capacity to generate Fundamental Solutions, is by helping the group-as-a-whole to become more aware of itself, and that this means making use of visual, body-centric or nature-based processes, in addition to more conventional dialogical processes.

In understanding this critical importance of The Group Unconscious, I have been surprised to notice its absence from most literature that I have encountered on organisational development, social change, group process and even psychology. This begs the question, ‘Why’, and also raises a challenge of how to situate The Group Unconscious in social theory. This is where I turn my attention in the next section.

3. Taking a Wider View

In this section I briefly explore where The Group Unconscious fits in social theory, consider its applicability in different contexts, and detail areas for further research.

Where does The Group Unconscious fit in Social Theory?

There is much literature on groups, but most of it essentially ignores the unconscious level of group experience. Why is this? Linda Caporaël offers an answer, saying that,

“In much of psychology... humans are presumed to be rational... in a state of conscious awareness as they choose the best options from an array presented by the environment” (Caporaël, 2001: 241).

She goes on to argue that, in practice, we see ‘irrational’ behaviour in groups all the time, and that there is an unconscious and automatic redefinition of oneself in terms of the group (Caporaël, 2001). As with Psychology, the dominant discourse in the fields of Economics, Sociology and Organisational Development – heavily influenced by rational choice theory – tends to either ‘explain away’ or simply ignore ‘irrational’ behaviour and thereby has no need to consider the phenomenon of The Group Unconscious. As a result, it is also ignored in most literature on Development and Social Change, which tend to draw on these fields of social theory.

There are, of course, exceptions in each of these fields of discourse, which fall outside of the dominant discourse. But even then, I have found only a few texts that give detailed consideration to the dynamics of groups *from the inside*. It is some of these texts that I have drawn upon in writing this paper. That they are the exception, proves the rule: that concepts about the unconscious level of group experience, and hence The Group Unconscious as a concept, are on the margins of social theory.

If I were pressed to place The Group Unconscious alongside particular streams of social theory, then I would place it with Post-Structuralism, Group Analytical Psychology and Process Orientated Psychology. It may in time prove to be, in the form I’ve started to articulate here, an original concept, and a genuinely new contribution to social theory. However, this claim needs considerable theoretical validation; in the form of a much more detailed literature review of the theories of groups and group processes.

The hypotheses presented in this paper also need verification for their practical applicability and relevance. Providing irrefutable proof for hypotheses about the internal and subjective dimensions of human experience is difficult, if not impossible. But a large body of supportive anecdotal evidence would more firmly ground these hypotheses as being valid – this is part of my future work.

Applicability in different contexts

I have developed my understanding of The Group Unconscious in some particular contexts, where there is a strong need for group synergy, because of the complexity, and particularly the Social Complexity of the problems to which group members seek resolution. It is in such contexts, where there is this imperative for high levels of collaboration to generate new possibilities together, that The Group Unconscious is likely to be most useful as a basis for intervention. In contexts and spaces where individually generated work is of primary importance, it may be that delving into issues around The Group Unconscious is more of a distraction.

However, while acknowledging that my understanding of groups has developed in some very specific circumstances and contexts, with very particular types of groups, I suggest that these hypotheses of the dynamics of The Group Unconscious exist in all groups in all situations; the difference is in what to do with that understanding.

Questions for further research and exploration

Some of the questions that I would like to reflect on and explore further, in order to refine, elaborate and extend the hypotheses made in this paper, include:

- What happens when a group disperses – what happens to The Group Unconscious? How does it affect the individual members of the group in other settings, in other groups?
- What happens if a group meets regularly over a period of time – does The Group Unconscious dissolve and re-form each time, or does it remain present and active within the individuals?
- In what ways do the specific inclinations and personality traits of individuals affect the Roles they are likely to be occupied by in any group setting?

- How do the power relations present in a group affect The Group Unconscious? What are the relationships between visible and invisible power and the conscious and unconscious realms of group experience?

For developing my own conceptual understanding, some of the theory I intend to explore further is: Arnold Mindell and others' writing on Deep Democracy; Bert Hellinger and others' writing on Constellations; literature on collective action that looks at group dynamics from the inside; and literature from sub-fields of psychology including, Process Orientated Psychology, Group Analytical Psychology, Perception and Gestalt Theory.

Most of all, I am keen to dive into practice once again. I look forward to taking the hypotheses I've articulated in this paper into my practice, and verifying and further refining them through that practice.

4. Implications for my practice

In this section I consider the implications for my future practice, in terms of methodologies, inner capacities and areas of work.

Methodologies for surfacing The Group Unconscious

What are the group process methodologies that can be used to surface The Group Unconscious, in any particular context? And what qualities, if any, need to be generic to all such methodologies?

Building on the hypotheses above, I can say that these methodologies must integrate ways of accessing presentational knowing with more conventional – rational and propositional – ways of knowing, and do so in a way that enables the group-as-a-whole to take that knowing into collective action. In this vein, Otto Scharmer (2004) talks about ‘letting go’ and ‘letting come’ as two crucial thresholds in processes where groups create breakthrough solutions. He suggests that the movement of groups through these two thresholds is akin to ‘going through the eye of a needle’. To facilitate a group through this movement, it’s useful to integrate visual, body-centric or nature-based processes – or other artistic and spiritual processes – with more conventional processes of group conversation.

However, in some situations it is possible and more useful to stay with conversational process and use that as the prime methodology for surfacing The Group Unconscious, all be it to a small extent. As an example, some colleagues of mine held a strategy day for the organisation they work with. The day was focussed on evaluating the past few months’ activities and planning for the next few months. From time-to-time during the course of the day, the group stopped this process for ten minutes or so, and reflected on their own interaction in the group, right now, and what lessons that may hold for their strategy. The group members reported that there was a heightened sense of presence during the meeting and a deeper level of strategic planning took place.

The story illustrates how sometimes it will be better to weave the work of surfacing The Group Unconscious into the content-related task process (here, strategy formulation). While at other times there will be a need for more dedicated and deeper work in surfacing The Group Unconscious, in which case, a visual, body-centric or nature-based process will be

needed. The former is less deep and takes less time; the latter is deeper and takes more time. The most appropriate intervention in a specific context and circumstance will depend on the nature and level of complexity of problems faced by the group, organisation or system.

These nuances around what to do in practice, illustrate how an understanding and embodiment of the principles behind any ‘tools for thought’ and any methodologies is crucial. We cannot really separate this aspect of ‘the internal condition of the intervener’ from the methodologies – they are not ‘instruments’ that are divorced from the person who is ‘using’ them. Rather, they are energies that manifest through the intervener. Choosing the right intervention, then, is about sensing how best to bring in the energies that will help to transform a group “according to its own laws” (Kaplan, 2002: 140).

Turning to specific methodologies for surfacing The Group Unconscious, there are three, which I speak of here, as methodologies that I’m particularly drawn to using: the *U-Process*, *Constellations* and *Deep Democracy*. I briefly describe these methodologies and how they help to surface The Group Unconscious.

The *U-Process* is a way of enabling groups to access their collective insight and take those insights into collective action (Hassan, 2005). It has three phases of Co-Sensing, Co-Inspiring and Co-Creating, which can be seen as sequential spaces that each enable a different quality of learning and change. The conceptual base for the U-Process is still being elaborated, and it is currently essentially a framework that provides a way of seeing a change intervention, and the principles to use at different stages, but doesn’t specifically give direction on what to do. The second phase of co-inspiring is described as a space for ‘allowing inner knowing to emerge’ and this is where the work of surfacing The Group Unconscious comes in most prominently. Often, this second phase has been practiced through a silent retreat into nature (Hassan, 2004b; Hassan, 2005; Kahane, 2004; Scharmer, 2004; Senge et al, 2004).

Constellations is a body-centric process through which a whole system of a family, group or organisation can be represented and felt as an active presence. The representation crucially contains both apparent and hidden elements of the system, and also the energies and relationships between these elements. In this way, Constellations very directly surfaces The Group Unconscious (Hellinger, 1998; Hellinger, 2002).

Deep Democracy is a conflict resolution process, which works by uncovering the Roles in the group-as-a-whole, and speeding up the process of Polarisation in a safe and controlled way,

so that shadow energies are surfaced and do not linger and grow into unconscious resentments and conflicts. Deep Democracy is primarily a verbal process, which encourages full emotive participation from group members in a way that is very theatrical – accentuating the real dynamics and thereby taking the sting out of them (Mindell, 1992; Wajzman-Lewis, nd).

These are three quite distinct methodologies, which work very well independently and may also be used in combination. I note that all three have some form of non-dialogical process at their core, and this is the place where The Group Unconscious is surfaced. The U-Process and Deep Democracy are largely conducted through conversation, whereas Constellations more directly taps into the flow of body-centred feelings and emotions – the channel of communication that Nichol (nd) talks about.

Other process methodologies that I have encountered, which can help a group in surfacing its unconscious experience, include: Word Café (Brown, 2005), Chaordic Design (Hock, 1999) and Circle process (Baldwin, 1996). There are also a number of organisations and communities of practice formed around group process methodology. Two that have particular relevance to the work of surfacing The Group Unconscious, are: the Collective Wisdom Initiative (www.CollectiveWisdomInitiative.org) and the Generative Dialogue Project (www.generativedialogue.org).

The inner state of the intervener

“The success of an intervention depends on the interior condition of the intervener”

– Bill O’Brien (Senge et al, 2004: 186)

To facilitate a group in surfacing its own unconscious dynamics, the individual intervener needs ‘to have’ and ‘to embody’ certain capacities. Firstly the intervener needs to be highly self-aware. Secondly s/he needs to have a capacity for deep centeredness, and thereby presence. Thirdly ‘meta-skills’ of Neutrality are crucial, as otherwise s/he is likely to get caught up in the dynamics of the group, and lose the trust of the group to help them through a resolution process.

On the first capacity, of self-awareness, Sue Soal says, “the ability to facilitate through a change threshold demands high levels of self-knowledge and self-acceptance” (Soal, 2004: 55). This self-awareness includes understanding, and acknowledging, one’s own spectrum of

personal and social identities. If I am to truly suspend judgement and work with ‘what is present’, rather than my own projections of what may be present or ‘needs to be present’, then there is a need for a high level of awareness of my own biases, lenses and ways of seeing.

The second capacity, of deep centeredness and presence, is crucial for being able to tap into the underlying stream of consciousness in a group. Being present ourselves, “grants us the ability to be genuinely present to others in all senses” (Teasdale, 1999: 165). And then, it is also crucial for being able to intervene appropriately. I have found that my capacity to ‘challenge’ (Klouda, 2004) depends a great deal on how centred I am.

The third capacity, of Neutrality, is about holding oneself and one’s identities with openness, and thereby holding the space open for whatever needs to arise. “This is the most difficult and contentious meta-skill to adopt, particularly when you have an agenda which needs to be met” (Wajzman-Lewis, nd). I have learned that this capacity of Neutrality is the key basis for my growth as an intervener who is simultaneously diving deeply into the particular context and working with what’s there (my ‘Doer’ and ‘Facilitator’ identities) and is helping to understand and create shifts in wider society (my ‘Thinker’ and ‘Social Activist’ identities). As Sue Soal says,

“...if we are to accept that something is moving anyway, and our task is to ‘read it’, to understand it, and to reflect it back to the participants in a way that lifts their own understanding in such a way that they can see it closely and at a distance, then we can truly see ourselves as instruments of something much greater than *this* moment or *this* group” (Soal, 2004: 58).

My practice going Fearward¹

“One does not discover new lands without consenting to lose sight of the shore for a very long time”

– *Andre Gide (Kaplan, 2002: 133)*

What am I most excited to work on as I look forward at the months, and dare I say, years ahead? And what capacities, knowledge and skills do I need to develop further in myself to do this work? These feel like the most important questions for me to hold as a basis for

¹ This term comes to me from Turner-Vesselago (nd: 6), and refers to going “where the energy is”

defining my practice in the near future. Here, I give the tentative responses that I have come to thus far.

In considering the work I feel most excited about, the ‘Learning Journey’ and potential ‘Change Laboratory’ on Integration in Western Europe – a project with an intention of deeply understanding and creating a breakthrough in the current tension-ridden dynamics around the integration of immigrant communities in several western European counties – holds the most energy for me. My excitement is due both to the resonance that this issue has for me, and the potential for innovative ways of working with a talented group of co-facilitators. I’m also excited to spread my current hypotheses about The Group Unconscious in the public domain, through writing and distributing articles and through running some public workshops. Beyond these activities, I simply want to engage in deep process work, which makes a difference in the world, through genuinely helpful interventions in groups and organisations – especially if they are groups and organisations dedicated to social transformation.

Turning to the development of my own capacities, in addition to the development of my conceptual understanding that I outlined at the end of section 3, I am particularly keen to train in Constellations process, and to start using it in a more fully-fledged way in my work. With process methodologies overall, I am keen to develop my understanding and skills with a range of body-centric processes. Finally, I see the work of developing my inner capacities of self-awareness, centeredness and neutrality as a lifetime’s journey, and shall seek to hone those at every opportunity.

July 18th, 2005. As I look out to the future from this closing week of my MA programme, and simultaneously look back over the past fifteen months’ living inquiry, I am held in captivated amusement by what Buddhists say about meditation: “Better not to start. Having started, better to continue” (Turner-Vesselago, nd: 3).

References

- Anderson, R. (2001). 'Embodied writing and reflections on embodiment'. *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*. Vol. 33, No.2: pp.83-98.
- Anzieu, D. (1984). *The Group and the Unconscious*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.
- Baldwin, C. (1996). *Calling the Circle: the first and future culture*. Gateway Books, Bath.
- Bion, W. (1961). *Experiences in Groups*. Routledge, London.
- Bloom, B. (1997). *Somatic Illness and the Patient's Other Story*. Free Association Books, London.
- Bortoft, H. (1996). *The Wholeness of Nature – Goethe's way of science*. Floris Books, Edinburgh.
- Bower, G. & Hilgard, E. (1981). *Theories of Learning*. Prentice-Hall, London.
- Brown, J. (2005) *The World Café: Shaping our future through conversations that matter*. Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco.
- Brown, R. (1988). *Group Processes: Dynamics within and between groups*. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Caporaal, L. (2001). 'Parts and Wholes – the Evolutionary importance of groups' in Sedikides, C. & Brewer, M.B. eds. (2001). *Individual Self, Collective Self, Relational Self*. Taylor & Francis, Philadelphia.
- Chapman, J. (2002). *System Failure: why governments must learn to think differently*. Demos, London.
- Cumming, J. (1999). *Problematic Moments in Global Groups: Using the Concept of a Dialogic Unconscious to Help Develop Group Competence*.
<http://www.ispsso.org/Symposia/Toronto/1999cumming.htm>. Accessed: 24-Jun-05.
- Diener, E. (1980). *Deindividuation: The absence of self-awareness and self-regulation in group members* in Paulus, P. (ed.) *Psychology of Group Influence*. Lawrence Erlbaum, Hillsdale.
- Foulkes, S. (1975). *Group-analytic psychotherapy: method and principles*. Gordon and Breach, London.
- Hassan, Z. (2004a). *The Little Book of Self-Organisation*. Pioneers of Change, Johannesburg.
- _____. (2004b). *The Source, The Suicide Bomber and Racial Equity as Art*. Generon Consulting, Boston.

- _____. (2005). *Connecting to Source*. Generon Consulting, Boston.
- Hellinger, B. (1998). *Love's Hidden Symmetry: what makes love work in relationships*. Zeid, Tucker & Co., Phoenix.
- _____. (2002). *On Life and Other Paradoxes*. Zeid, Tucker & Co., Phoenix.
- Heron, J. (1996). *Co-operative Inquiry: Research into the human condition*. Sage Publications, London.
- Hock, D. (1999). *Birth of the Chaordic Age*. Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco.
- Jaworski, J. (1996). *Synchronicity: The inner path of leadership*. Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco.
- Kahane, A. (2004). *Solving Tough Problems: an open way of talking, listening and creating new realities*. Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco.
- Kaplan, A. (2002). *Development Practitioners and Social Process: Artists of the invisible*. Community Development Resource Association, Cape Town.
- Klouda, T. (2004). *Thinking critically, speaking critically*. Unpublished paper.
- Marshall, J. (1998). *Living Life as Inquiry*. Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice, Bath.
- Merrill-Sands, D., Holvino, E. & Cumming, J. (2000). 'Working with Diversity: A Framework for Action'. *Gender & Diversity*. Working Paper 24.
- Mindell, A. (1992). *The Leader as Martial Artist: An Introduction to Deep Democracy*. Lao Tse Press, Portland.
- Molnos, A. (1998): *A Psychotherapist's Harvest*.
<http://fox.klte.hu/~keresofi/psyth/psyhthr.html>. Accessed: 15-Jul-05.
- Nichol, B. (nd). *The Group Unconscious*.
http://www.businesscoachinstitute.com/library/group_unconscious.shtml. Accessed: 24-Jun-05.
- Ormerod, P. (2005). *Why most things Fail: Evolution, Extinction and Economics*. Faber and Faber, London.
- Reddy, B. (1995). *Intervention skills: Process consultation for small groups and teams*. Pfeiffer Wiley, Chichester.

- Reicher, G., Levine, R. & Gordijn, E. (1998). 'More on Deindividuation, power relations between groups and the study of social identity'. *British Journal of Social Psychology*. Vol. 37, pp. 15-40.
- Scharmer, O. (2004). *Theory U: Leading profound innovation and change by presencing emerging futures*. Unpublished Draft – First Chapter Forthcoming Book.
- Senge, P., Scharmer, O., Jaworski, J. & Sue Flowers, B. (2004). *Presence: Human purpose and the field of the future*. Society for Organisational Learning, Boston.
- Soal, S. (2004). *Holding Infinity: Guiding Social Process*. Community Development Resource Association, Cape Town.
- Teasdale, W. (1999). *The Mystic Heart*. New World Library, Novato.
- Turner, J. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: a self-categorisation theory*. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Turner-Vesselago, B. (nd). *Freefall: writing without a parachute*. The Writing Space, Toronto.
- Wajzman-Lewis, M. (nd). *Staying on the Bus – Deep Democracy Yellow Belt Trainers Manual*. Cap Gemini Ernst & Young, London.