



LISTENING TO THE UNCONSCIOUS IN SELF, GROUPS AND SYSTEMS

A Workshop based on the Group Relations Framework

July 30- August 2, 2025
MUMBAI, GCC HOTEL AND CLUB

10th in this series of workshops offered by Group Relations India



WHY DO WE NEED TO LISTEN TO THE UNCONSCIOUS?

*Until you make the unconscious conscious,
it will direct your life and you will call it fate.*

C.G. Jung

THE UNCONSCIOUS AND ITS INFLUENCE

Often, we have a notion of ourselves as autonomous, objective and rational beings, driven by logic and facts. When in fact, at every moment of our lives, there is a process that we are not conscious of, that is beneath the surface, termed the unconscious. Unconscious processes within us are often aspects of ourselves, or our experiences, that we suppress and 'forget' as they cause us embarrassment or even pain.

We expend a lot of psychic energy ensuring that these remain 'inaccessible' or suppressed. Each of us goes through life carrying a baggage, a load in the form of deeply held assumptions and conclusions. Our actions and decisions are often unconscious responses to these personal histories and cultural dictates. 'Forgetting' or suppressing these also gives us stability and we steer clear of examining the relevance of these assumptions to our current contexts and realities. The price we pay of avoidance is that we limit our ability to make effective decisions and generate creative options for our personal development, and our leadership.

UNCONSCIOUS DYNAMICS IN GROUPS AND THEIR INFLUENCE

Another reality that we are often not aware of is the reality of groups in our lives. We are in groups all the time. These are often part of organisations and

larger systems. We are sometimes in the role of a manager, team member, coordinator, consultant, etc. At other times, we are simply a member such as in a family, affiliation/social groups or a group in an organisation.

Groups, like individuals, also have unconscious dynamics, that operate beneath the surface. Tasks don't get done as planned, and people get caught up in counter-productive processes often leading to frustration, emotional turbulence, break in relationships, and delays or derailments. These dynamics remain in tension with the groups' commitment towards development and learning from experience.

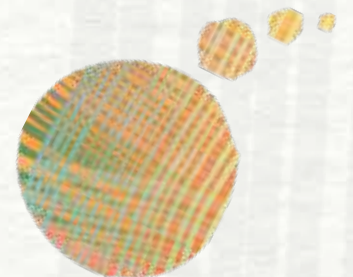
The individual is a group animal at war, both with the group and with those aspects of his personality that constitute his 'groupishness'.

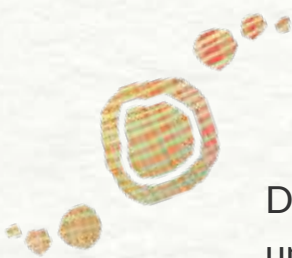
Wilfred Bion

WHY LISTEN TO THE UNCONSCIOUS?

We take on different roles in groups we are part of. In all these roles, it is useful to develop an awareness of what working in a group entails, what unconscious dynamics operate in a group and the implications these have on the way the group functions in relation to its task; and how may we, individually and collectively, better support the task of the system, rather than colluding with the dynamics of task avoidance.

Surfacing of these unconscious dynamics is likely to confront us with another set of questions. It may need us to access our own 'here & now' experience, leading us to questions such as "How am I behaving in a group? What is the unconscious 'role' that I seem to have taken? In what ways does the group affect me? What of my unconscious resistances and defences does this evoke? What roles do I usually end up taking in groups?





Do these roles serve the task or divert from it and end up serving unconscious needs?" We may have resistance to these questions and to learning from our direct experience. We prefer 'not-knowing', even though there is a cost to ourselves and to systems we are part of.

Studying the resistance itself may help us listen to what else is at play. Exploring and working with unconscious dynamics may help us orient ourselves to work in a manner that enables the system to be more focussed on the task.

There are ways of becoming aware of, and of working with unconscious processes in self and in groups that are provided by pioneers in the psychoanalytic tradition such as Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, Carl Jung, and Wilfred Bion that inform the work in the workshop. The tradition of work on the unconscious that is called Group Relations is influenced by this as well as other streams, such as systems thinking, socio-technical systems, and socio-analysis.

Work on the unconscious and recognition of its impact however has had an extremely long history and can be seen in thought and philosophy in the Indian sub-continent: the Upanishads, Buddhist and Jain philosophy, and literature on Yoga. Applying the group relations framework to interrogate wider social phenomena such as caste and gender, and their implications for leadership in systems in India, has also informed the practice of Group Relations in India.

WHAT IS THIS WORKSHOP ABOUT?

The workshop is a learning event where we offer the opportunity to work with this framework in an experiential way, as well as engage with related concepts. The idea is to learn through experience, derive one's own insights, and apply them to one's roles in the workshop itself and in back-home situations - both organizational and personal.


The workshop will provide an opportunity to enhance the awareness and understanding of:

- Unconscious processes in individuals, groups and systems, and how their interplay impacts the task in the 'here & now'
- Choices and options that this exploration opens up that render us less susceptible to the grip of the unconscious, and more supportive of the actual task
- Exploration of the implications of the above for one's roles in systems one is part of

THE PRIMARY TASK OF THE WORKSHOP

By the term primary task, we refer to the reason for the existence of any system, organization, or institution: its most important task, one that defines its nature and core purpose. If not worked at, the system or organization would lose its meaning.

The primary task of this workshop is to work with unconscious processes at the level of self and group, and explore how their interplay impacts our taking up roles in systems we are part of.



This would be through one's direct experience in the here and now, as well as working with the application of conceptual frameworks.

METHODOLOGY

The workshop methodology is primarily experiential. We will work towards the primary task through a combination of our direct experiences in the here & now, reflection and insight-generation, and application of conceptual frameworks.

A range of learning events such as Small Study Group, Plenaries, Interactive Concept Sessions, and Workshop Sensing Matrix, Reflection and Application Group will be used.

FOR WHOM IS THE WORKSHOP MEANT?

This workshop invites as members, anyone for whom learning via direct experience is appealing. This asks of members the capacity to be open to experiencing in the here & now, reflecting on one's experience - both past and present, and to work with one's resistance to learn from one's fresh direct experience instead of labelling it on the basis of past.

The previous editions of this workshop have had participants from corporate organizations, development and other not-for-profit sectors, health care systems, trade unions, educational institutions, and also those with no particular paid working role.

THE STAFF

The staff of the workshop will be in roles such as director, administrator and consultant. Collectively they form the management of the workshop and manage the boundaries of task, time and territories.

Workshop Director: Vartika Jaini

Workshop Administrator: Lokesh

Workshop Director and Administrator form the **Directorate** of the workshop


Consultants will be drawn from: Ganesh Anantharaman, Sunitha Lal, Vartika Jaini, Veena Pinto, Yash Kaul

STAFF PROFILES

Ganesh Anantharaman, M. Phil, works as a consultant to leadership dilemmas in organizations, relying on the Group Relations framework. He also practices as a psychoanalyst in the Lacanian orientation. Since his introduction to Group Relations in 2003 he has taken up the member role quite a few times, and has also staffed several conferences in India and abroad. He has directed conferences and other workshops offered by Group Relations India, and is a trustee as well as a member of its programmes committee. He remains curious about how the unconscious operates within and without us, and is on a quest to befriend it.

Lokesh is the Executive Director of the Centre for Education and Communication (CEC), a non-profit organisation that works with informal workers and small producers. She has participated in four Group Relations India events. Lokesh holds an M.Phil. in Sociology from the Delhi School of Economics and brings extensive organisational experience along with a strong commitment to reflective, justice-oriented spaces.





Sunitha Lal is the CHRO of Ather Energy. She is a seasoned organisational development strategist and people practices expert. With over 2 and a half decades of experience, she has been a pivotal force in shaping organisational cultures and driving transformative change. A member of the Group Relations India (GRI) community since 2015, she has actively participated, as both staff as well as member, in numerous conferences and workshops, delving deep into the realm of unconscious processes and their impact on individual and organisational evolution. Her passion for understanding the human psyche has led her to explore the power of storytelling, as evidenced by her captivating collection of short stories, “Dotting the Blemish and Other Stories,” which offers poignant insights into the lives of women navigating the complexities of patriarchy.

Vartika Jaini, a group relations practitioner, has been in roles of member and staff in Group Relations Conferences since 2010 and directed two group relations workshops. She is a member of Programmes Committee of Group Relations India. She uses the group relations framework to consult and write on institutional development and organisation learning. Vartika has founded Vriddhi Rural Prosperity Services, a social enterprise that works on accelerating impact. Her area of work is community centred, purpose driven design for social impact and systems change. In her work of over two decades in this field, she has helped incubate institutions and partnerships between state and civil society. She is a graduate in economics, a postgraduate in rural management and a Chevening Gurukul Fellow at Kings College, London.

Veena Pinto, MA, Clinical Psychology and post graduate Human Resources Management. She has over 20 years of experience in corporate Human Resources and is presently working independently as an Organization Consultant and Coach. Member A.K. Rice Institute for the Study of Social Systems, (AKRI), Associate Member Group Relations India, former Board Member and Professional Member of Indian Society for Applied Behavioral Science (ISABS).

Yash Kaul is Co-Founder and CEO of Helmier Limited. He is a BITS Pilani – Pilani and IIM-Kozhikode Alumni with 29 years experience in various roles in speciality pharmaceuticals and medical devices organizations. Yash is a Group Relations India (GRI) associate and has been engaged in this methodology for more than 11 years of which he has been on staff/consultant roles since last 7 years. He has authored and presented a paper on application of GR frameworks in corporates titled “Rol(l)ed Into One” and also presented in GR Adda. GR methodology informs the way he has been managing and leading in various systems. Yash is passionate about Music and Marathons

ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

WORKSHOP VENUE

GCC Hotel and Club
Off Mira Bhayander Road, Mira Road (E),
Thane, Maharashtra, India, 401107.

www.gcchotelandclub.com

This is a residential workshop. Detailed information on travel logistics and venue facilities will be sent to members on confirmation of their applications.

WORKSHOP DATES

July 30- August 2 (Wednesday – Saturday), 2025

Registration of members to the workshop is from 1030-1130 hours on Wednesday July 30, 2025. The workshop will open with a Plenary at 1200 hours on July 30, 2025. The workshop ends at 1630 hours on Saturday, August 2, 2025.

Members need to plan to arrive on July 30, in time for registration, and may leave on August 2, after the workshop closes.

WORKSHOP FEE

The workshop fee is INR 48,000 plus 18% Goods & Services Tax (GST), which makes it a total of INR 56,640 payable. For international members (and those residing outside India), it is USD 655 plus 18% GST (USD 773 payable). This fee includes accommodation and board on a twin-sharing basis which is booked from noon of July 30 until August 2 mid-morning.

A limited number of single occupancy accommodation is available at a higher cost, on a first-come-first-served basis. Members preferring single occupancy are requested to write to us at Ittuc@grouprelationsindia.org for details.

SUBSIDY IN FEE

Recognising that access to financial resources is varied, GRI is committed to making group relations work accessible to a wide membership, thus enabling people from a range of economic and work sectors, and also those representing many other important diversities to attend. We believe that this diversity in membership contributes to the opportunities for learning for all conference members.

We are particularly keen to make group relations opportunities available to those working in the social justice and development sectors such as small, under- resourced NGOs, community-based organisations, and movements.

Those seeking a reduction in fee are required to write to us at the time of applying, giving the reason for, and the amount of subsidy on the full fee they seek. We will revert to you on the subsidy we can offer based on the total number of requests we receive, the relative merits of each case, and the number of full-paying applicants we get.

It would help us to decide on requests for a subsidy in fee if those seeking it write to us by **June 28, 2025**. We also offer the option of paying the fee in instalments, if that helps potential members to decide.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for membership of the workshop, you would need to fill in the online application form using this [LINK](#). Please note that the invoicing and GST details in the application form are required by us to fulfil statutory compliances.

Applications will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis. Kindly note that the last date for receipt of applications is **Tuesday, July 22, 2025**.

Once your application is accepted by us, we will separately initiate with you, on email, the process for your fee transfer. Your place in the workshop will be confirmed when your fee payment is completed. This has the outer timeline of **Thursday, July 24, 2025**.

REFUND POLICY

Refund after deducting 25% towards administrative expenses will be made to those who withdraw on or before July 22, 2025. For withdrawals after that, refunds will not be possible.

GRI'S POLICY ON PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT (POSH)

Group Relations India maintains a stance of zero tolerance for sexual harassment. GRI's policy on prevention of sexual harassment is available for download on its website at the link www.grouprelationsindia.org/posh. Any complaint may be brought to the notice of the Directorate or to the Chairperson of the Internal Committee of GRI for further action as may be needed and appropriate. In the decision to participate and /or nominate its employees, individual participants and employers agree to be governed by the policy and cooperate with it, for incidents or complaints arising within the duration of the event.

SPEAK TO US!

For further discussions, and to assist your decision about the workshop, we would be happy to speak to you. Message Lokesh (+91 85879 56746) or Vartika (+91 99108 66637) to set up a time for a conversation. Or email us at: Ittuc@grouprelationsindia.org

The working language of the workshop is English.

If you are moving through a time of particular personal difficulties, we suggest that you consider postponing your participation to a later time as the workshop is designed as a learning environment and is not meant to be a substitute for personal therapy.

We look forward to hearing from you and welcoming you to the workshop!



Dates to Note

JUNE 28: Preferred date by which applications that have requests for subsidy in the fee are received

JULY 22: Last date for applications

JULY 24: Last date for making payments to confirm participation



ABOUT GRI

Group Relations India (GRI) was founded in 2013 with the vision of an institution that is committed exclusively to group relations methodology, and of making the potential of this methodology available to members from a wide section of Indian society, having different representations and interests. It is conceived of as a 'home for GR' in India.

Group Relations based interventions and institutions in India and internationally owe much to the pioneering work done in the 1950s onwards at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations UK and the many brilliant practitioners associated with it, who through their contributions to theory and practice shaped this work.

For more information, please visit www.grouprelationsindia.org



Design by **Smriti Chanchani**