

2019
24th - 29th June
Mumbai
India

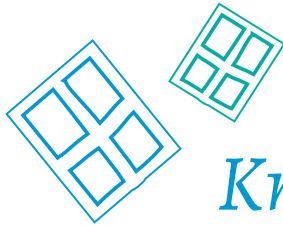
KNOWING

& NOT

KNOWING

Intention and Risk in Self and Systems

The Eleventh Group Relations Conference
Offered by Group Relations India



Knowing and Not Knowing:

Intention and Risk in Self and Systems **2019**

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The Eleventh Group Relations Conference
Offered by Group Relations India (GRI)

Group Relations India (GRI) promotes experiential learning of individual, group, and organisational processes. It uses systems psychodynamic and socio-analysis approaches, which pay particular attention to unconscious processes. GRI offers a variety of educational programs and workshops for the enhancement of skills and competencies in this area. It also networks with like - minded professional bodies and organizations to further this aim. www.grouprelationsindia.org

Dear prospective member,

A Group Relations Conference (GRC) offers a unique opportunity to explore how you take up roles in the various systems that you are part of, as well as the habitual patterns that influence individual and group identities and collective behaviour – both conscious and unconscious.

The belief that we “ought to know” overrides the wonder of staying in “not knowing”. The gentle Buddhist Monk Thich Nhat Hanh said, **“People have a hard time letting go of their suffering out of fear of the unknown. They prefer suffering that is familiar.”** This results in the process of staying with habits and declarations of “this is me” even when these prove to be dysfunctional.

This GRC focuses on the theme of knowing and not knowing and explores how both these stances influence the forming of our intentions and the possibility of our taking risks. What is our intention where what one took as the truth yesterday, becomes a question mark today, and may well become obsolete tomorrow? What choices do we make – consciously or unconsciously – about what we will know and not know? What risks are we taking & avoiding? What is their real nature?

The implications of these questions on popular notions of leadership and followership, and on the quality and effectiveness of systems and institutions we belong to, build, and nurture, are yet another area for exploration.

Through its title and task, this GRC is an invitation to explore these dynamics at various levels – the individual, group and system, recognising that these levels of awareness are interdependent and are constantly shaping and co-creating one another.

We invite members representing a range of work settings, roles, lived realities, and identities, to engage with these issues by making sense of one’s direct experience. Note that we use the word conference in the sense of to ‘confer’ – to bring together – in conversations, dialogue and exploring together. The setting is not a series of lectures or speeches to a passive audience. Far from it!

If learning from direct experience and a methodology of learning based on one’s own authority is appealing to you then this ‘conference’ is likely to be of immense value to you. We look forward to hearing from you and welcoming you to the conference.

Rosemary Viswanath & Ganesh Anantharaman
Conference Directors

What are Group Relations Conferences (GRC)?

GRCs are designed as temporary organisations for learning through direct experience, which may well be the only way of sustaining learning.

The focus is on the conscious and unconscious processes that we create, which impact us as members of groups and systems. The spotlight in a GRC is also on groups as systems, and how they develop a conscious and unconscious life. Designed as it is, a temporary institution, away from the busy-ness (and business!) of day to day life, and with a minimum of predetermined structure, it offers a fresh and different space to see the same things, but with new eyes.

Pioneered by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, London, in 1957, and introduced in India in 1973, GRCs are based on the frameworks of systems psychodynamics developed by social scientists and psychoanalysts such as, Freud, Klein, Bion, Lewin, Miller, Rice, Turquet, and Chattopadhyay, among others. Over time, the theme, design and structure of the conferences have undergone innovations and adaptations in the light of varying contexts and interpretations. However, the focus on unconscious processes in groups and systems, leadership and the exercise of authority, and learning through 'here & now' experience, has remained intact.

The Theme as Context¹

If there is one common denominator across the history of human culture, it is the insatiable hunger to know the not known - that is, to know everything, and to know it with certainty. However, paradoxically, this urge belies the very essence of the human spirit, which is to be a witness to mystery - of the unknown and the unknowable! An even greater paradox perhaps, is that, even with all the vast knowledge produced by human beings, we know little about the knowers of knowledge - ourselves! We tend to place our attention more outward than inward. Thus, the even greater mystery is: who are we; who am I?

The many systems we live and work in are themselves located in contexts that are continually changing, impacting all aspects of our lives. We are bombarded by new ways of communicating with revolutions in technology. Social institutions such as marriage, family and community, religion and politics are all changing, often dramatically, resulting in stress as well as opportunity at the individual - system interface.

At another level, therefore, in an ever-changing world, 'knowing' is a myth – albeit a useful one. For example, it may be too much for us to wake up each morning, look at ourselves in the mirror and ask, "Who am I?" Yet, not asking the questions, "Who else am I?" from time to time, may lead us to believe that we are 'finished products'. This may lead to repetition, stagnation, lack of vitality and frustration. In our relationships, we often do not want to see the evolving

1. A GRC with this title was offered in 2016, and we would like to acknowledge the brochure written then, for some of the ideas in this section



changes in others, because if we did, we ourselves would have to change in order to continue to relate meaningfully to them. No wonder then that the phenomenon of relationships breaking down or becoming mechanical is not uncommon.

The diversity, dynamism and the uncertainty of environments and resources in today's world also throw up systemic crises that require fresh approaches and responses. The idea of organisations as complex adaptive systems is gaining ground and reflects the aspect of intention in systems. Seeing organisations as capable of learning and evolving strategies, structures, and processes, challenges our control-oriented approaches to manage the uncertainty that is inherent in tasks, and cope with the risks that come along with it.

Furthermore, ideas about leadership don't always consider the aspect of acknowledging one's personal authority and the place of spirituality in responding to uncertainty and the “not known”. Both have elements of intention and risk embedded in them! Thus, contrary to popular belief, it may also be useful to think about ‘not knowing’ not as the opposite of ‘knowing’, but as the ability to be open. This quality of not knowing will allow us the opportunity for wonder, and the useful stance of putting aside our need to constantly defend what one already knows.

This Group Relations Conference, through its theme, posits the idea that these stances may invite fresh insights and interpretations of un-thought knowns and unknown thoughts both.

Conference Primary Task

The term Primary Task refers to the reason for the existence of any organisation or institution - its most important task – that which defines its nature and core purpose. If not worked at, the organisation would lose its meaning. This GRC will work to the following primary task:

To study the exercise of authority and the nature of leadership that emerges in the taking up of roles through the interpersonal, intergroup and institutional relationships that develop within the conference as an organisation within its context.

The theme - Knowing and Not Knowing - provides the immediate context of this GRC. It furthers the invitation, whilst engaging on the primary task, to explore if (and how) intention and risk influence in obvious and in subterranean ways, the exercise of authority and the taking up of roles.

The GRC is also situated within its wider context, and therefore the work on its task is also an invitation to explore these dynamics at various levels – the individual, group, organisation, and wider social systems, recognising that these levels of awareness are interdependent fractals, and are constantly shaping and co-creating each other.

Conference Design

The conference design provides a variety of opportunities to discover how much one's experience of the 'here and now' is influenced by phantasy (beliefs that are more linked to one's valences and untested assumptions), helping one to recognize and work with both individual and systemic unconscious processes.

Each event is designed to offer the possibilities of a varied view from which one perceives oneself and others. The multiple roles one takes up in different events in the GRC invariably reflect the assumptions and roles we deploy in our day to day life, and how these contribute to, or take us away, from the task.



The stance of the conference is one of developing a spirit of enquiry into one's experience through attention, exploration, experimentation, reflection, and the capacity to wonder. There is no preset curriculum or evaluation of performance. Using the theme, task, structure, and framework as resource, members generate learning and insights based on their personal authority. They are, therefore, likely to derive different kinds of learning.

This year we offer two sub-conferences within the conference

Entry sub-conference: This is for those participating in a Group Relations Conference for the first time.

Furthering sub-conference: This is for those who have had prior experience of a Group Relations Conference and wish to further their learning this time.

Some of the events and plenaries will be common to members of the Entry and Furthering sub-conferences. The Furthering sub-conference will be offered subject to adequate number of members applying for it to be feasible as a learning experience.



The Role of Staff

While staff and members are both participants in the conference, they are in different roles. Staff are allocated to each of the events in the role of consultants, and in their role of collective management, to work to the primary task of each event, and thus to the task of the conference as a whole. As consultants they offer working hypotheses, which aim to interpret group or system level unconscious processes by making sense of their own and members' experiences, constantly linking this to the task and theme of the conference.

Conference Management and Staff

Directors: Rosemary Viswanath (also Director of the Entry sub-conference) and Ganesh Anantharaman (also Director of the Furthering sub-conference)

Conference Administrators: Swathi Seshadri (also pre-conference administrator) and Meenakshi Vijayasimha

The Conference Directors and Administrators form the **Directorate** of the Conference. They would also be consultants in some events.

Consultant Staff will be drawn from among: Dipankar Banerjee | Gunjan Zutshi | Haritha Sarma | Kartikeyan V
| Uma Ravikumar | Vartika Jaini | Veena Pinto | Yash Kaul



Staff Profiles:

Dipankar Banerjee, BME, PGDM- IIM Calcutta, Associate Member- GRI. A Management Consultant and an Executive Coach. Attended GRC at the Tavistock Institute, London, and has acted as a Consultant in many national and international GRCs. Was the head of HR of many large companies of India. Also acted as a resource person in Development programmes in India and abroad, organised by IIMs, ISB Hyderabad, LBSNAA, Mussourie, INSEAD, Singapore etc. and published articles in professional journals, and in a book.

Ganesh Anantharaman, M. Phil. Political Science (Mumbai University); Associate Member, Group Relations India (GRI); Associate Certified Coach (ACC), International Coaching Federation. Ganesh consults primarily to the corporate sector on Leadership Development and Culture-Building. He has been on the staff of several Group Relations Conferences in various roles since 2003, including that of Associate Director in the 2018 Conference.

Gunjan Zutshi, Masters in Business Administration (MBA), organization development professional working with organisations and individuals as an enabler in their change journeys. Co- founder of AgileSattva - a firm that uses humanistic and systems approach to Agile transformation. Accredited Organisation Development and Change Practitioner from Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science (ISABS) and practicing psychotherapist.

Haritha Sarma, M.Sc. Geology, worked as a hydro geologist and planner of Natural Resource Management projects. Haritha is a process facilitator, gender trainer and organisational development consultant. He has worked extensively with groups, organisations and networks engaged with addressing issues related to structural poverty and marginalisation. Haritha has been on the staff of several Group Relation Conferences in India.

Kartikeyan V, B.Com. Madras University, PG.D.PM & IR (XLRI, Jamshedpur). Has worked in Human Resources leadership roles in several corporates in India for twenty years. Has been an Organisation Development (OD) & Leadership Development (LD) Consultant and Executive Coach for over ten years now and is currently the Chief Architect of the Transformative Alignment Map (c). Is a co-author of a book “Discover the Alchemist Within: Taking the first step towards personal growth”.

Meenakshi Vijayasimha, M.Sc. Cytogenetics, M.B.A in HR (University of Wales, Cardiff); is passionate in facilitating growth and organization change processes in Leadership, Management and Organization Development. She has worked in Corporate, Social Development, Government and Educational Sectors. Co-founder & Director at Advaya Humanistic Systems. Meenakshi is a Certified Neuroscience based Coach. She is a Professional Member of the Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science (ISABS).

Rosemary Viswanath, B.Sc. (Hons) Mathematics (Delhi University), P.G.D.M. (IIM, Bengaluru), Founder & Managing Trustee, Group Relations India. Has consulted in and directed Group Relations Conferences in India and internationally since 1987. Consults on developing leadership, organizational strategy and change processes primarily with social development, social justice, and human and environmental rights organisations and movements.

Swathi Seshadri, M.Com. (Mumbai University), M.A. in Social Work (Tata Institute of Social Sciences), Striving for social justice, equity and equality have been Swathi's primary work for the past 19 years. She has worked in several civil society organisations in rural and urban spaces and has worked with diverse society groups. She is interested in understanding how systems are influenced by the unconscious mind, which she hopes will aid her endeavour towards seeking social justice collaboratively.

Uma Ravikumar, Masters in Business Administration with 20 years of experience in business and leadership roles in organisations like Oracle and an OD professional. She is a facilitator of leadership workshops, certified executive coach and consultant for organisation change initiatives. She is a certified performance assessor and project management professional; passionate about understanding gender diversity and patriarchy, she focuses specifically in the area of women's leadership.

Vartika Jaini, is an economics graduate from Delhi University and a rural management professional from IRMA. She has founded Vriddhi Rural Prosperity Services, which works to accelerate the process of transformation, with focus on tribal pockets in India. She uses Group Relations frameworks in understanding and working with systemic change. She has participated regularly in group relations conferences as member and staff. Vartika is a Chevening Gurukul Fellow at Kings College, London.

Veena Pinto, M.A. Clinical Psychology, PGDHRM. Has over 30 years of experience including 15 years as an HR Leader in several corporate organizations in India and abroad. Currently an independent Coach, Consultant and Trainer. Professional Member of Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science, Member of AK Rice Institute for the Study of Social Systems, USA.

Yash Kaul, B.Pharm. (Hons) BITS Pilani, Diploma in Marketing Management (NMIMS) and Executive Management Program (IIM Kozhikode). Twenty-two years' experience in pharmaceutical and medical device industry in varied managerial roles. Currently Vice President Sales and General Manager at Smiths Medical managing the Southern APAC region. Keenly interested in exploring the unconscious processes as they occur in real life situations like corporates and other systems. Passionate about music and singing.

Administrative Details

Conference Venue: The venue is on the outskirts of Mumbai.

GCC Hotel and Club

Off. Mira Bhayander Road, Mira Road (E)

Thane, Maharashtra, India. 401107

www.gcchotelandclub.com



Detailed information on how to reach the venue and other joining information will be sent to members on confirmation of their applications.

Timings & Registration:

Registration of members to the conference is from **1200-1330** hours on **June 24, 2019**

The conference will **open** with a **Plenary** at **1400** hours on **June 24, 2019**

The conference **ends** at **1630** hours on **June 29, 2019**



In order to plan your travel, you may like to know that members are expected to arrive at the venue and check in to their rooms at noon on June 24 and check out of the rooms by June 29 mid-morning. You can leave at the close of the conference at 1630 hours. It would take around 90 minutes of travel time between the airport and venue, given monsoon and traffic conditions.

Fee

- The conference fee is INR 72,000 plus 18% GST² (i.e. INR 84960 is payable). For international participants it is USD 1,800 plus 18% GST (i.e. USD 2124 is payable)
- The Early Bird Fee is INR 68,000 plus 18% GST (i.e. INR 80240 is payable). The Early Bird Fee for International participants is USD 1,500 plus 18 % GST. (i.e. USD 1770 is payable)
- Last date to avail the Early Bird Fee: *Your fee should be received by us by **April 10, 2019** for you to qualify for early bird rate, so kindly plan your application and fee transfer accordingly.*

The conference fee is the same for Entry and Furthering members. This is a residential programme and the fee includes accommodation and board on a twin-sharing basis which is booked from noon of June 24, 2019 until June 29, 2019 midmorning. Any extra stay needs to be negotiated separately with the hotel, keeping the preconference administrator in the loop.

². Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates prevailing at the time of payment will be applicable

Single occupancy accommodation is available at an additional cost of INR 9000 plus 18% GST which amounts to INR 10620 payable. For International participants this would be USD 125 plus 18% GST which amounts to USD 147.5 payable. You need to mention this requirement at the time of applying and payment.

Bursaries:

GRI is committed to ensuring that group relations work is accessible to a wide membership, which has enabled people from a range of economic and work sectors and representing many other important diversities and regions to attend. The diversity of members is the hallmark of our conferences, contributing in no small measure to the depth and richness of the learning.

Our fee structure is based on cost as we operate in principle as a not for profit organisation. We are particularly committed to make group relations opportunities available to those in the social justice and development sectors. A few partial bursaries are available for participants from small under-resourced NGOs or community-based organisations and movements. Those seeking bursary are required to write to us at the time of applying giving the reason for, and the amount of bursary they seek. We will revert to you on the amount we can offer based on the total number of requests made, the relative merits of the case, and the number of full-paying applicants we get. *It would help us to decide on all bursary requests if those seeking a bursary write to us by **Wednesday, May 15, 2019.***

How to Apply

Applications in the required online format will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis. You may fill the application and then check with us if there is place before you pay. The online form you filled can be accessed by you later to fill in the payment and statutory details. Applications are not confirmed automatically. Places in the conference are limited, and your place will be confirmed by us on receipt of both the online application form and the conference fee. Click [here](#) to apply.

Payment Details:

We prefer payments to be made by bank transfer. If you would like to pay by cheque, we request that you drop the cheque in a branch of HDFC bank near you, mentioning our account number. For both options details are given below:

GRI Account Details:

Account Name Group Relations India

Account Number 50200002769010 Type: TASC Current Account

Bank/Branch HDFC Bank, Indira Nagar 100 feet Road (Branch No 1755), Bengaluru, India

IFS Code HDFC0001755 (applicable for domestic transfers)

SWIFT Code HDFCINBB (applicable for international transfers)

GRI's GST & PAN Details:

Name Group Relations India

GST Number 29AACTG0900H1Z0

State Registered in Karnataka

Type of Service SAC code: 998311

PAN AACTG0900H

Important: We request you to fill in the transfer details / cheque details as well as details linked to GST in the application form as these are required by us for statutory compliances.

Refund Policy: Refund after deducting 25% towards administrative expenses will be made to those who withdraw before June 3, 2019. For withdrawals after that, refunds will not be possible, but we do consider the option of holding a part of your fee towards participation in a future event of GRI.

Speak to Us: For further discussions and to assist your decision about the conference we would be happy to speak to you. Message **Swathi** (+91 9448474911), **Ganesh** (+91 9886406806) or **Rosemary** (+91 9845403773) to schedule a conversation. Or email us at: grc@grouprelationsindia.org

Please Note: If you are living through particular personal difficulties, we suggest you consider postponing your participation as the conference is designed as a learning environment and is not a substitute for personal psychotherapy or counselling.



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





Knowing and Not Knowing: Intention and Risk in Self and Systems

This conference offers you the opportunity to explore through direct experience the processes of self authorisation in taking on roles in groups and systems and the place of intention and risk in this endeavour. The stance of the conference is one of developing a spirit of enquiry into one's experience through attention, exploration, reflection and the capacity to wonder. This has the potential to lead to transformed ways of being and relating in a range of interpersonal, institutional and societal spaces.

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