



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Learning to be a Member

Picture a 13th century building in York, England (“old” York as opposed to New York). Leaded glass windows, two foot thick stone walls, and a beginning SCT group, with six nationalities and five languages represented among the 13 participants. The group was part of the annual SCT Training Week sponsored by the University of York which, thanks to the efforts of Una McCluskey and Liza Bingley Miller, houses the SCT training curriculum for Europe.

Briefly, in this experiential training group, discovering how to be a member started with learning to use functional subgrouping - joining others on similarities and asking “anyone else?” Early in this process, several group members identified the temptation to withdraw or the pull into the “withdrawal role” and the whole group discovered that this role kept the members and the information they had out of the group.

A bit later, a member started a subgroup to explore how to tell the difference between explaining and exploring. One member noticed his body was different in exploring, he leaned forward in exploring and back in explaining. Another noticed her energy felt higher in her body when explaining than when exploring. Still another realized that exploring felt freer. This led to a group understanding of the freedom in being a member without the constraints of the personalized roles, like the withdrawn, collapsed or good-boy role.

Later in the group, a member was finding it hard to hear and began blaming herself. She was able to recognize the “fork-in-the-road” between taking her “not hearing” personally or raising the issue as work for the group. The group picked it up right away, some members found the language or accents made it hard to hear, others the soft voices, still others the speed of some members’ talking. The exploration deepened as members got free of the tendency to blame themselves for not hearing and then moved to explore the challenge of really hearing each other, even when the language was known. Several members for whom English was not their native language recognized that not knowing all the nuances that one uses to *explain* in one’s native tongue actually made it easier to explore.

The learnings were moving to all of us: “surprised that I was saying one thing and doing another and could see it without feeling guilty,” “gained the ability to decide as a member, rather than just personally,” “recognized the investment each of us made into the system and the mutuality of the relationship with the system we built.”

In five days this new group found the freedom in member role that provided the alternative fork to the personalized roles. The group recognized that functional subgrouping created the security that made it possible to continue to take the member fork, which then developed the group that made it easier to be a member.

These simple and quite profound learnings are ongoing for all of us in SCT, as we keep taking up the challenge of being a member while we develop the kind of organization that makes it easier to be a member. This is especially important in SCTRI as we contribute to the ongoing process of development and separation and individuation at all levels of the organization.

For example, when “deciding as a member rather than just personally,” trainees assess themselves using criteria for readiness rather than affiliation or

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stereotypic checklists. This happens when members are moving from foundation to intermediate level training; or deciding to apply to the new authority group; or when they recognize that the pain and sadness they feel when a member decides to leave a work group is a voice for more than just themselves.

Whether in a beginning group, more advanced groups or in continuing to develop SCTRI through work groups, our ongoing work is to reduce the pull to personalizing so that we can be more of ourselves and continue to separate and individuate as people and as members.

-Susan Gantt

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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Members,

It is hard to believe that another Newsletter is just about to go out!

The pages of this Newsletter reflect that we are in the throes of a transformation. As an organization and as individual members, we are starting to make SCT our own. Voices expressing a mature integration of SCT theory and practice, as it applies to a variety of fields, are breaking through like crocuses in springtime. In this issue, you will find fascinating articles on the application of SCT to working with Racism and Cultural Diversity, Business Consultation, Neurobiology and Attachment Theory. To put it colloquially, we are growing up!

In the System Mentors Report, you will discover that SCTRI is about to separate from RHD (Resources for Human Development), the umbrella organization that has sheltered us financially and legally. This birth is momentous. The fact that we are ready to leave the parent organization that has held us for so many years is both organic and astonishing.

In this issue, there are several articles that reflect the ways that people have made SCT theory and practice their own. Katarina Billman has written the first of a three-part series of articles that chronicles a case in which she successfully applied SCT to a difficult group dynamic in a business setting. Mark Johnson has written a piece in which he reflects on the confluence of the ways that SCT, Attachment theory and Neurobiology look at the phenomena of emotion. Linda Solomon reflects on how the neurobiological understanding of Dan Siegel helped her to understand the neurological implications of separating facts and feelings in her work with a traumatized client. Joan Adams has written an erudite and insightful article about how she is using a systems-centered perspective to understand racism and cultural identity. Yvonne has also shared two excerpts on Centering and Functional Subgrouping from her upcoming handbook for patients and therapists. There are also Thumbnail Sketches, Reports and Updates from the various centers and action groups and a fascinating dialogue on the neurobiology of emotion that was sparked by a question that Mark Perlmutter sent out over the listserv that we have published in the Members Forum.

I hope that you enjoy this issue. The Newsletter is the major way that the membership communicates to itself about itself as a "membership-as-a-whole." We would like the Newsletter to continue to be self-correcting, goal-directed and attuned to your needs. We can only do this if we receive your feedback. Please let us know what you think!

-Michael Robbins

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EMERGING THEORY BY YVONNE AGAZARIAN

CENTERING

Goal: To be centered into the here-and-now context, with distractions becoming peripheral to our apprehensive experience.

When we are centered, we can sit at the edge of the unknown with curiosity, explore our experience, comprehend as well as apprehend our context, turn on our researcher and observe and be aware of ourselves, our roles, and our history. The flow of energy and information through our center connects us to ourselves and the world around us. Through centering we become mindful.

All SCT exercises must be practiced on oneself, and mastered, before they are used with others.

Sit comfortably

1. Do not "sit up!"
2. Feel the floor under your feet.
3. Feel the seat under your bottom. (Sitting on your sit bones helps!)
4. Let your head float up. (Your spine actually ends by your ears, so let your head go free.)
5. Let your spine follow your head.
6. Let your shoulders relax.
7. Feel your rib cage widen and raise.
8. Breathe up "through your feet." (This relaxes your diaphragm.)

(If you are anxious, press down with your feet as you breathe in and press down with your thighs when you breathe out for a few breaths.)

Drop your eyes

1. Drop your eyes towards the floor.
2. Focus your inward eye into your center (about three inches below your belly button and towards the center of your body).
3. Let yourself relax into your experience.
4. Let distracting thoughts float away. (Don't worry if they don't!)

Let yourself feel peaceful

1. Your body may feel heavy.
2. Your body may feel light.
3. You may feel unfamiliar.
4. You may feel peaceful.
5. You may just feel ordinarily like yourself.

Raise your eyes

1. Prepare to raise your eyes.
2. Open your eyes and widen your peripheral vision.
3. Let yourself have a panoramic view of your environment.
4. As soon as you have your panoramic view, focus on some thing or someone in front of you. (It is not good for your eyes to stay in a wide focus without also having a

focal point.)

5. Maintain your panoramic view and focus.

Notice how you relate to the world. See if your everyday conflicts and worries are now on the periphery of your attention, and if your centered self is your focus.

FUNCTIONAL SUBGROUPING

Goal: The goal of functional subgrouping is to enable people to join on similarities rather than separate around differences.

SCT assumes that when one recognizes and integrates similarities (in information that is apparently different) and differences (in information that is apparently similar) then one whole system will survive, develop, and transform from simpler to more complex.

Functional subgrouping is the method which helps integration to happen. As in all SCT techniques, the method must make common sense to the people using it. Building a functional subgroup means responding to each other with something that builds on what the other is saying; and joining with what is similar enough in content and feeling so that the other person feels joined. A useful analogy is "keeping the scale balanced" or "rowing the boat with others," rather than "waving from the shore," or "pushing the boat out to sea."

This SCT exercise may be used both personally, so that different sides of oneself can communicate to each other, and also with others when "others" are interested in trying it out.

HOW TO SUBGROUP FUNCTIONALLY

Talk, and when you have finished what you are saying, say "anyone else?"

1. "Anyone else" lets other people know that you have finished what you are saying.
2. "Anyone else" lets other people know that you want them to respond to you.
3. It helps if you don't say too much so that people don't get distracted by trying to remember everything you said.

Look Around!

1. When you say "anyone else?" look around so that others know that you mean it.
2. When you look around, move both your eyes and your attention to others.
3. When you meet other's eyes, make room for meeting them.
4. This takes practice!

Expect someone to join you with a similarity.

1. When someone joins you on a similarity it feels that they have listened.
2. When you are joined on a similarity, you often feel understood.

When you don't feel joined, say so!

1. Sometimes someone else's join seems too different from what you said.
2. Say "I don't feel joined!" when you don't feel joined.
3. When people don't feel joined, they feel dropped. This is an uncomfortable misattuned feeling.
4. It is good for functional subgrouping to be aware when people are dropped.
5. If you don't say "I don't feel joined" you can easily go into an old role that you developed when you experienced misattunements.
6. It is much better for the system to know when a member has been dropped rather than joined, than to lose the member's energy or risk the member going into an old role.

Joining on a similarity.

1. When you respond to someone else's "anyone else?" join on a similarity. When you join on a similarity, the other person feels that you have listened.
2. When you join on a similarity, the other person feels that you have understood.
3. When people feel that they have been listened to and understood, they feel good. It is because they feel that someone is attuned to them, and attunement always feels good.
4. When people communicate with attunement to each other, it builds an attuned climate.
5. In an attuned climate people feel more secure.
6. When people feel secure, they are free to explore their experience. They are curious about themselves, the world and others.

Look at the person you are joining.

1. When you look at the person you are joining, you meet each other's eyes.
2. When you meet another's eyes you meet each other's energy.
3. It is easier to build a subgroup when the subgroup feels the energy.
4. Building a subgroup builds a little system with energy in it.

Build on other's ideas.

1. When you build on someone else's ideas with your own it lets them know that what they have said meant something to you as well as to them.
3. Joining is different from agreeing or repeating the same thing.
4. Joining is different from asking a question about what another has said. Questions are not a join. They are leadership behaviors that lead others into answering what you asked and away from where they were.
5. When you build with your own ideas, you have brought part of you into the subgroup.

If you lose your subgroup say so!

1. Ask for people to put their hands up who are still in the subgroup.
2. It is important to let both you and the system know where its working subgroups are.
3. When you want to know where your subgroup is, ask, even if a different subgroup is working. It never hurts for one subgroup to hold for a moment while other subgroup members re-connect back by putting their hands up and making eye contact.

As different people join and build, the subgroup gets bigger.

1. Stay in the boat with your subgroup.
2. Be ready to put your hand up if someone asks who is in the subgroup.
3. Ride the waves as your subgroup gradually changes as the different builds get taken in.
4. Stay attuned to yourself when you find you have dropped out of your subgroup.

When you are no longer in the subgroup, say so!

1. Say "I dropped out of the subgroup" when you have!
2. It is important for subgroup members to know where the energy of the subgroup is, so it is important when your energy has gone!
3. When you have dropped out of the subgroup, stay focused and see if another subgroup comes up for you.

If you want to start a different subgroup, ask!

1. When you know you want to start a different subgroup, get yourself clear as to what it is!
2. Ask if there is room for a different subgroup. If the system is not ready, your subgroup will not have the energy it needs to launch.
3. If the group system says it is not ready for a different subgroup - hold on until it is.
4. This is important because every system needs to be able to explore its differences as well as its similarities if it is to develop and transform.
5. Practice getting a feel for when the group has its energy available to take in a difference.

When you want to join every subgroup as it passes you by, think twice!

1. It is important to be able to see both similarities and differences.
2. Some of us experience similarities much more easily than differences, therefore it is easy for us to see the similarity between us and every other subgroup.
3. Learning to subgroup functionally means seeing both similarities and differences.
4. The challenge of subgrouping is to notice the inklings that you could also join a different subgroup.
5. Take opportunities to start a different subgroup. It takes practice!

When no subgroup is quite right.

1. It is important to be able to see both similarities and differences.
2. Some of us see differences between ourselves and others much more easily than we see similarities.
3. Learning to subgroup functionally means seeing both similarities and differences.
4. The subgrouping challenge is to notice that you have something in common with a subgroup in spite of the differences.
5. Join a subgroup and stay with it through thick and thin!

THEORY, RESEARCH AND APPLICATION

SEPARATING FACTS FROM FEELINGS

While reading the beginning of Dan Siegel and Mary Hartzell's book, *Parenting from the Inside Out* (2004), I found that it was important for me to take notes in order to help integrate my understanding of brain function as it relates to implicit and explicit memory. By taking notes, it was as if I could more easily take in the information and open a door to context, which I hoped would make the memory of what I was reading stick. As I was taking notes I started to think of a client who, after suffering a trauma, began flooding with emotions at unexpected times and described herself as "going crazy" because she did not know why she was crying. She lacked the explicit memory of the trauma and therefore lacked the context for why she was crying at that moment.

What I discovered from my reading was that in order for implicit memories to cross over into explicit memories, the hippocampus must be activated. During a trauma, explicit processing may get blocked because the activity in the hippocampus is inhibited.

Implicit memory is the early memory we are born with that includes emotional, behavioral, perceptual and bodily modalities. It is memory without words. Explicit memory is implicit memory processed through the hippocampus, which is the basis first for factual, and then for autobiographical forms of memory. The mind is then able to build on implicit memory through the integrative process of the hippocampus and create a contextual mapping of experience.

So, going back to the aftermath of some traumas, I had the question: does systematically separating facts from feelings by going through the events of the trauma activate the hippocampus, thereby integrating the experience? I am reminded of the EMDR protocol as well as SCT protocols of Crossing the Boundary and dream processing. I am looking forward to my next session with this client to see what effect separating facts from feelings will have in reducing the unexpected flood of emotion. I am also hoping this work will change the client's relationship to herself, from "I'm going crazy" to "this makes sense in the context of my traumatic experience."

-Linda Solomon Scott

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POINTS OF CONVERGENCE AMONG TLHS, ATTACHMENT THEORY AND NEUROBIOLOGY

One of the ways to compare theories is to see how they each address similar phenomena. In this piece, the phenomena of interest is emotion and the similarities between the Theory of Living Human Systems (TLHS), which is SCT's meta theory, Attachment Theory and Neurobiology. In each case, an analogy will be used to illustrate how the models handle a classical domain of interest in psychology and philosophy, namely the relationship between mind and body. The literature offers a variety of loosely equivalent pairings related to these two constructs, e.g., thinking and feeling; cognition and affect; psychological and physiological; spiritual and material, etc.

TLHS has important points of overlap with both Attachment Theory and Neurobiology. One arena where this comes alive is in the realm of emotion. Emotion, according to TLHS, is "a primary, apprehensive process" differentiated from feelings, which are viewed as "a secondary, comprehensive process." (Agazarian, 1997, p.302). Critically, it is this comprehensive process that enables emotions to become verbalized as feelings. Feelings thus have two sources: thoughts and emotions.

Recall that in TLHS, apprehension is defined as "intuitive understanding: nonverbal and non-cognitive." (Agazarian, 1997, p.299). Comprehension, by contrast, is defined as "knowledge arrived at through cognitive processes of thinking and imagination." (Agazarian, 1997, p.300). This leads us to the following analogy:

TLHS: Emotion=Apprehension; Feeling=Comprehension

Attachment Theory (McCluskey, 2005) offers another lens through which to consider emotion. In Bowlby's early, seminal work on attachment (Bowlby, 1969), emotion, feeling and affect were all somewhat intermingled. The central aspect of interest to developmentalists wasn't so much the felt experience of any emotion, but the "intuitive appraisals" (Bowlby, 1969, p.104) required to produce them. Unfortunately, this view blurred the distinctions between emotion and feeling.

McCluskey's (2005) work presents us with an elegant clarification from her attachment research by differentiating affect attunement from empathy. Building on the work of Stern (1985), affect attunement was seen as occurring "mostly automatically and largely out of awareness," while empathy

“involves the mediation of cognitive processes.” (McCluskey, 2005, p.49). Thus empathy, the verbalized, cognitive expression of our attunement, is a second order process and requires as a precursor affect attunement. Building on the first analogy above, we can then suggest the following:

**Attachment Theory: Affect attunement=Apprehension;
Empathy=Comprehension**

In Siegel’s recent work *The Developing Mind*, (1999), he defines emotion as “dynamic processes created within the socially influenced, value-appraising processes of the brain,” (Siegel, 1999, p.123.). While he is careful not to limit the brain location of emotion to the limbic system, he does see the limbic system’s function as being specialized to “carry out the appraisal of meaning or value of stimuli” (p.122). For the neurobiologist, the “common distinction between thought and feeling, cognition and emotion, is artificial and potentially harmful to our understanding of mental processes” (p.123). Nonetheless, these limbic appraisals producing emotions are seen as “primarily non-conscious mental processes” (p.132). The expression of these internal emotional states is what Siegel calls affect. In order to get from affect to consciousness (a slippery topic if there ever was one), he notes the longstanding research linking the cortex to attentional processes. While admittedly reductionistic, the analogy that emerges is as follows:

Neurobiology: Limbic=Apprehension;Cortical=Comprehensive

As a last point of comparison beyond simply these analogies, consider what each model has to say about the experience of “resonance.” TLHS defines resonance as “experiencing the core synchronicity between oneself and a part of oneself; between a part of oneself and another; and sometimes, when resonating with the system hierarchy, centering oneself in the system as a whole” (Agazarian, 1997, p.306).

TLHS: “Joining on Similarities.” “When members are resonating with each others’ similarities, it is easier to work together and to accept and integrate small differences” (Agazarian, 1997, p.45).

Attachment Theory: “Affect/empathic attunement.” “Affect attunement comprises two stages: stage one requires being in resonance with the feeling state of another; stage two activates a desire to communicate that one knows the affective state of the other ... in such a way that the infant knows their experiences” (McCluskey, 2005, p.49).

Neurobiology: “Attuned communication.” “Attuned communication involves the resonance of energy and information. For the nonverbal infant, this intimate collaborative communication is without words.”

Summary of Points of Convergence Among the Three Models:

1. Apprehensive processes are important to each model; emotion (TLHS), affect attunement (Attachment Theory) and limbic system (Neurobiology). The most parsimonious integration of these three constructs is that all three are naming

a basic human function that is preverbal and a precursor to feeling states which arise after the arousal of emotion.

2. Comprehensive processes likewise appear in each model: feeling (TLHS), empathy (Attachment Theory) and cortical function (Neurobiology). Again the simplest form of these three models suggests that verbalizable experience comes from the flow of information that begins in emotional appraisals and is expressed after cortical mediation.

-Mark Johnson

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**NOTES FROM THE INSTITUTE AND
WORKSHOP ON RACISM AND
RACIAL/CULTURAL IDENTITY**

Presented at the SCT Annual Conference in March, 2006

As SCTRI survives and develops, it has opened its boundaries to ideas, insights, techniques and people who are different in some ways and similar in others. One area that is not new to SCTRI, but has been re-visited with much energy over the last two years, is dialogue and exploration about the impact of race, identity, racism and white privilege. I led a one-day Institute and a two hour Workshop at the 2005 and 2006 SCT Conferences entitled “*Racism in Work with Clients and Colleagues: Experiencing the Impact of Racial/Cultural Identity.*”

The Conference sessions explored the experience and impact of race, racism and other aspects of social identity, including ethnicity, class, age, gender, sexual orientation, and spirituality/religion in the interactions between clinician and client and among colleagues. The sessions also considered the impact of historical, political and social contexts of the practitioner and the client. The leader presented some basic assumptions about systemic racism in the United States, about the history of the construct of race and of racism, and, provided a group structure for exploring group members’ awareness of their own social identities and context. The group further explored their attitudes and feelings about race and other aspects of their social identities with the goals of increasing members’ awareness of similarities and differences between themselves and clients/colleagues, and of increasing participant’s level of comfort and ability to address racial and other differences of identity in their work. The group participated in an exercise on Self-Identity which called for members to describe the ways in which they identified themselves, and the meaning and feelings about those social identities. The group also subgrouped around the experience of doing the group identity exercise. There was also room to address examples of members’ clinical work in which clinician and client were of similar and different racial/cultural backgrounds. These are some of the questions that I

addressed:

- 1) Why are identity and context important in doing therapy, and in relating to colleagues and others?
- 2) Why, particularly, is it important to have a conceptualization of racism, along with race, ethnicity, class, and the meaning of these and other aspects of identity (i.e., sexual orientation, gender, age, religion) in doing psychotherapy and relating to people?
- 3) What is the historical/political context of these aspects of identity?
- 4) What are the power dynamics involved in the therapist's attitudes and feelings about their own and their client's identity and context?

I start with the premise that in the United States the reality of racial and ethnic identification is imbedded in the warp and woof of the national psyche and culture. The United States is a race-based society, where whites have unearned privilege and access to opportunities and power, and people of color occupy positions of subjugation and have less access to opportunity and power.

Historically, the United States is a country of immigrants who destroyed or displaced the Native populations and imported African slaves who were considered 3/5ths of a human being. We are a country that developed to serve several functions:

- A sanctuary for immigrant European groups who were attacked or marginalized for their religious beliefs and practices;
- A new land "discovered" as a place to expand settlements (eventually from the East Coast to the Pacific Ocean via "Manifest Destiny") and create new wealth;
- A place where European indentured servants could work off their indenture and prosper economically;
- A place where existing European governments (England, Spain, France, etc.) could reap the economic and political advantages of colonies;
- A place where immigrants could later throw off the colonial powers and create their own wealth or livelihood or simply live as they wished;
- A place that could attempt a new form of government based on freedom and democratic participation in governance for free men of northern European descent;
- A place to send inconvenient family members.

Native Americans, the many Indian nations, were regarded as hostile peoples to be conquered or helpful "savages" to befriend, learn from and later displace or destroy. African slaves were brought to work cotton and tobacco plantations after Native peoples and European indentured servants did not tolerate the heat and labor. In order to justify the enslavement and brutal treatment of African slaves in the context of Christian morality, slaves were regarded as less than human.

In the late 19th century a "scientific" categorization of human "races" was devised. The racial categories were called: Caucasoid (from the Caucasus Mountains); Mongoloid (from the Mongolian region); Australoid (from the continent of

Australia), and Negroid, which was based on the Spanish word for the color black – negra (the only racial category that was not grounded in a real place – no reference was made to Africa).

In a training on racism, culture and undoing racism presented by The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond it was noted that "the concept of racism came into being in the late 19th century as a way of justifying European interaction with the colored peoples of the world (via colonialism and white supremacy) in the context of European morality and ideas about God." Those trainers and others define racism as racial prejudice plus systemic power to deny or grant access based on race. David Wellman, in *Portraits of White Racism* (1993), defines racism as a "system of advantage based on race." Peggy McIntosh in her monograph, *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* (1990) describes the systemic, unearned privilege that whites have in the society. Beverly Tatum, in *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* (1997), discusses the way in which one's class, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, and mental and physical ability influence the degree to which whites benefit from racism and the degree to which people of color are disadvantaged by racism.

The notion of who is considered white has evolved over the history of the country. For example, Italians, Irish and Jews were discriminated against (and anti-Semitism still holds sway in many areas of the country) and were not considered "white" until well into the 20th Century. The predominant culture of the USA was that of British, German and other northern European immigrants. Catholics and Jews were seen as suspect. Chinese men were allowed to immigrate to build the railroads that opened up the West, but immigration laws dictated that they could not bring women or children. Again, the prejudices and negative stereotypes that exist among all peoples were systematized in laws and practices that advantaged "white people" and excluded and disadvantaged people not considered white.

Since the change in the USA immigration quotas in 1965 many people of color from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central and South America, and many white people from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have immigrated to the United States. This has changed and made more complex the dynamics of racism and oppression that existed over the history of this country. It should be noted that responses to these immigrant groups over the past thirty-five years have been influenced by political considerations that are often manifested in the context of racialization. An example is the different response of the government to the immigration of Puerto Ricans and Cubans. The political and economic interest of the US government resulted in a policy of doing little to encourage or support Puerto Rican settlement here, while openly subsidizing the settlement of Cubans who migrated when Castro replaced Batista. Puerto Ricans were, and continue to be, portrayed in negative ways similar to African Americans and both groups are seen as "dark," people of color, i.e., Black. The Cubans in the first migratory wave, on the other hand, were in fact "white Cubans" who came from educated, often aristocratic backgrounds and were regarded as "white" in the racial power relations of this country.

Other examples include the presentation of Caribbean

people of African descent as more hard working and ambitious than African-Americans. There was, and is, no acknowledgement of the impact of being descendents of slaves in island countries that have a majority of Black people who now ostensibly run their country **versus** being African American descendents of slaves who at best, provided services in segregated Black communities with no power to control those communities and no role in controlling the structures of the larger society. There is also the example of different Asian groups being regarded as one group and portrayed as “the model minority.” All immigrant groups are quickly introduced to the United States cultural norms that relegate African Americans and dark Latinos to the bottom of the pecking order with negative stereotypes of “lazy, oversexed, not intelligent” etc. Think about immigrants that you know. How many of them initially see identification with the African American community and culture as positive and helpful in advancing their movement into “successful” middle class American life? At the same time, groups immigrating since 1965, especially groups of color, have taken on the models of the Civil Rights, Black Power and Affirmative Action movements of the Black community to press for recognition and political power for their communities.

The Women’s Movement, Gay and Lesbian Rights Movement, Puerto Rican and other Latinos Movements, and the Native American Movement developed historically out of the strategies and successes of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements of the 60’s and 70’s. This reality has had the paradoxical effect of moving the society toward more tolerance of non-patriarchal, non-hetero-sexist, non-European norms and culture, while denying the continued systemic ways that “race” is used to over privilege “whites” and under privilege/oppress people of color.

One other very important process has continued and increased throughout the history of this country. That process involves the cross fertilization of cultural styles, values and attitudes, and the vital contributions of individuals from all ethnic and racial groups. Again there are paradoxes operating in this cross over of cultures. In the midst of the devaluation of particular racial, ethnic and gay/lesbian groups, those groups have made powerful contributions to the American landscape. There has been less a melting pot than a simultaneous continuation of values and styles within a community, an adaptation/assimilation into the mainstream culture, and an influencing of that mainstream culture. Some examples are the constant impact of Black music and dress styles on the popular culture of the country; the push toward bilingualism and biculturalism in an historically ethnocentric country by the increasing Latino and Asian communities; and the push toward more public dialogue about the expression of eroticism, the fluidity of sexual attraction and the deconstruction of the definition of family by the lesbian and gay communities.

The present diversity in this country offers many opportunities for a much richer and more nuanced human interaction. In order to arrive there we need to be clear about our own identity and past and present socio-cultural-political context, as well as our attitude and feelings about aspects of our identity and context. We need to understand the impact of systemic racism on people of color and on white people,

especially the unearned privilege that accrues to whites in this society. It is also useful to consider the Stages of Racial Identity Development, theoretical constructs developed for Blacks by William Cross in the 70’s, for Whites by Janet Helms in the late 70’s and 80’s, and some beginning work on such models for people of Latino and Asian descent.

It is important to keep in mind that a holistic understanding of oneself and of others involves a textured awareness of the particular interaction of personality style; aspects of identity such as gender, sexual orientation, race, class, ethnicity, age and the person’s experience of these; status, role and power; and the social, historical and political context of the person. I believe that aspects of identity and context and their affective experience can be powerfully explored in a group setting that is open to differences and similarities in the here and now.

The SCT concept of subgrouping around similarities to deepen the exploration of feeling states and having different subgroups work in the same group-as-a-whole as a tool toward conflict resolution is consistent with my assertion that it is in the **explicit exploration of individual identity and context in a group setting** that members of the group begin to hear the similarities in the apparently different and the differences in the apparently similar. I maintain that in order for people to fully appreciate the experience of the “other,” the person must explore his/her own identity and feelings about that identity and context. Sharing one’s experiences around culture, identity, style, and context in a group that is comprised of people with differences in terms of race, ethnicity, class, age, and sexual orientation moves the group to experiencing more about who the other is and then hearing the similarities as well as the differences.

-Joan M. Adams

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FROM FLIGHT TO COOPERATION : A BUSINESS CASE - PART I

The purpose of this article is twofold. First, it is an attempt to integrate ideas from the world of business with SCT theory, methods and techniques. The second, is to share one of the most challenging team development assignments I have worked in my role as an organizational consultant. I was not sure how it would end and I had to make much use of my intuition. Now, as I look back, I realize that I used SCT more than I was aware of at the time. The case will be presented in three articles. This is the first.

Background and Context of the Case

The Human Resources (HR) Director of an international group of chemical companies contacted me with an assignment. His problem was with a management team that was leading a specialist unit providing services for the entire organization with the mission to minimize the time for the legal approval of chemicals launched into market. The team

had formed from a merger that took place the previous year among three regional teams, each led by its own team leader, into one corporate team with one team director. According to the HR Director, this had been a painful year of organizational change that had caused lots of resistance among the team members and former leaders. The HR Director described the current functioning of the team as very poor, with a weak team director.

The corporate management team of the unit had failed on two occasions to arrange a “kick-off” event for all of its members with the goal of presenting goals, roles and context for the restructured and now global unit. Two consultants had previously been hired, one after the other, and subsequently fired by the team director’s immediate supervisor.

The HR Director gave me the mandate to work with the team for a period of ten months to “fix” the problem. I asked the HR Director who would be the official client and he responded that it would be the team director. My rationale for seeking this clarification was to undo the vagueness in roles, including the facts that the HR Director had approached me for this assignment, while the team director’s supervisor had been the one that had fired the two consultants prior to me and I was to work with both the team leader and his team. Or, put into business terms, I wanted to know whom to bill, and with whom to discuss issues around the contract and the work in progress. The clarifying of roles also had an important ethical impact.

Work in progress

Meetings with team leader

I arranged a meeting with the team leader with a hypothesis, based on the information given to me up to that point, that he was being seen by the HR Director as the “identified patient” and was being “scapegoated” by his team and his supervisor. I further hypothesized that he was at risk of being the next person fired, which at times happens in organizations in the fight phase. One of my primary goals for this first meeting was to collect information from which to develop a plan (much like a clinician uses an initial interview to develop a treatment plan). At this meeting, the team leader described his version of the problem. Out of that discussion emerged further evidence that the system was in fight. The team leader blamed his employees and his supervisor for the poor performance of the team, while acknowledging that they, in turn, blamed him.

My other major goal for this meeting was to develop a working alliance with the team leader (again, much like a clinician uses the initial interview to build rapport). I did so by staying as attuned to him as possible. After he had shared his information with me, I informed him how I preferred to work and told him that I would be intervening directly with the team as they worked, which would include consultation to him in his role as team leader. I explained that if he did not take that “just personally,” we would both be able to serve as role models for the team. He agreed to my proposals and we set up a phone meeting to review a proposed agenda for the first meeting. We decided that I would work with the team for a total of ten days broken up into two-day and one-day sessions. Since the team members came from Europe, America and Asia, we decided that I would work with them in conjunction with their regular-

ly scheduled business meetings at diverse locations.

First meeting – Day 1

I was very nervous for the first meeting with the team, and worked to undo internal distractions including the negative prediction that I would end up as the third consultant to fail and be fired from the assignment. I then shifted to my consultant role before walking into the room where the ten members of the team had gathered.

I had formulated an overall goal for the first day that I shared with the team: “To create a good platform for the process of Management Team Development”.

The sub-goals for the first day, which would build that platform, were:

- Get to know each other;
- Define long term goals for our work (long term being defined as ten months);
- Define short term goals for our work (short term being defined as four months);
- Define structure (time and place for meetings);
- Define and clarify roles and process for the work;
- Give information on the systems-centered approach to work with organizations, and its practical implications for this team;
- Collect information about what the team wants to do and not do during meetings.

Since a new member, me, had just joined the group there was some turbulence as the team temporarily regressed to social defenses and flight. I took advantage of this shift from fighting proposals by the leader to seeking the leader’s approval, by asking them to agree to my proposed goals, which they did.

The group started to formulate specific goals for our work together. The members agreed on a long term goal: to build trust in the group. We collected information from each member and the group estimated themselves to be at an overall mean “trust level” of three on a ten point scale. They agreed that an ideal goal would be to reach an average trust level of nine by the end of the year. The group then formulated short term goals: to clarify the Management Team’s role in relation to its goal, and to plan and successfully execute an international kick-off event of their team function within two months.

First meeting – Day 2

Having already informed and clarified roles with the team during the first day, I explicitly handed over task leadership to the team leader and took up the role of process leader. The team continued to work their business agenda while I helped the team prioritize agenda items and also supported the team director in vectoring the team’s energy towards its goals.

I intervened with the leader and team when functional. There were a lot of fight phase behaviors (personal attacks, defenses, sarcasm, whispers). I immediately intervened whenever those behaviors appeared. Translated into SCT language, I used boundarying interventions to filter out defensive noise in communication. I used contextualizing interventions to normalize struggles and lighten up the

atmosphere in order to help both the members and leader stay in functional roles and not take things “just personally.” On the agenda we had arranged time before lunch and at the end of each day for me to comment on the group’s process and to collect a force field with the group on “drivers” and “obstacles” (the business terms for driving and restraining forces) toward their goals. I also took some time for brief lectures on SCT theory and ways in which the theory applied to what had happened in the group. My purpose for that was to demystify my interventions as their consultant and thereby reduce paranoia towards me so that I could help them build a safe working environment.

By the end of the first meeting I felt we had achieved a working alliance. The comprehensive criteria I used for checking on our “working alliance” were: an exploration together in subgroups, all voices were heard, group members stated they wanted to meet again to work and behaved accordingly by jointly making plans for setting up new meetings, and members respected time boundaries. In SAVI terms the criteria would be: a majority of yellow and green light behavior in the team’s communication with me, for example, building ideas, factual questions and answers, work jokes and humor. Finally, but no less important, were the apprehensive criteria I used to assess whether I had developed a working alliance: the feeling that there was a sense of security in the group and that I had access to my creativity and spontaneity.

During that first meeting the team jointly decided on their goals for further team development and cooperated with the leaders to agree on the structure for upcoming meetings.

Leadership interventions, based on SCT, that were driving forces for the group:

- Setting the structure at the very beginning of the work by clarifying boundaries in time and space;
- Clarifying roles, goals and contexts;
- Vectoring the team’s energy towards subgrouping when there was disagreement around goals or reaction to the structure, which helped decrease the acting out of fight behaviors and managed intra-group conflict;
- Recognizing that the team had briefly regressed to an earlier developmental stage (flight) with a consultant having joined the team;
- Making proposals and allowing members to subgroup around their reactions, rather than giving commands;
- Normalizing reactions and explicitly stating that the team has the information required to reach their goals;
- Normalizing and depersonalizing again and again when fight behaviors occurred;
- Making time for the team to work both task and process, i.e., supporting the team’s work on their business agenda while holding the structure and making process interventions as needed;
- Being alert to gossip outside the meeting (during breaks) and discretely facilitating bringing the gossip information across the boundary back into the group during the formal meeting;
- Filtering out defensive noise in communication as it

appeared;

- Staying attuned to members and to the group-as-a-whole.

Second meeting – Day 1

The second meeting took place three weeks after the first. We had a similar structure to the first meeting: the consultant (me) took up both task and process leader roles during the first day. The team leader took over task leadership for a regular business meeting on the second day.

We began the first day of the second meeting by collecting a force field of what had been going well and not so well for the team since the last meeting. I started with the driving forces in order to build a positive atmosphere in the group. After that we shifted to what had been hindering the team by identifying the easiest restraining forces to reduce, and agreed to get right to work.

I made an internal judgment that a safe enough atmosphere was now in place and that it was time to deepen the work. I picked up on the long term goal of the group “to build trust.” The team subgrouped around “trust” and what that really meant for them. I did not “teach” subgrouping, but simply intervened as necessary until they subgrouped by building on each other’s ideas. After a while I proposed an operational definition of trust to the group as: “an expectation of future outcome based on experience from the past.” From the subgrouping around trust and the added definition, the team members realized that the behaviors they enacted in the “here-and-now” with each other created the platform for how they perceive each other in the future. We also did important work defining the goal of the management team and its role, both essential ingredients to prepare for the corporate kick-off event.

Second meeting – Day 2

On the second day of the second meeting I again shifted over to process leader role and helped facilitate the business meeting, with the team leader in task leader role. Part of the agenda was allocated to plan for the kick-off event. My goal again was to reduce typical “fight phase” behavior. I was especially alert in supporting the team leader, who was “scapegoated” by team members as responsible for causing all the group’s problems. I supported his taking up an appropriate leadership role instead of falling into a dysfunctional role of “defending himself and counter-attacking.” By the end of the fourth team development day the team was fairly familiar with “noise” in communication and able to recognize their own behavioral patterns of vagueness, redundancy and contradictions. They returned to their home countries with the beginning of a plan and strategy for the kick-off event. The atmosphere in the group was somewhat lighter compared to the first meeting. The team would meet on one more occasion before the big kick-off event, planned to take place approximately 6 weeks later.

Leadership interventions, based on SCT, that were driving forces for the group:

- Clarifying structure and roles for the two days and holding that structure;

- Vectoring the teams energy toward its explicit goals ;
- Focusing on and emphasizing team's past successes, which helped the team establish a reality tested database;
- Undoing vagueness of goal "to build trust" by operationally defining "trust;"
- Support of subgrouping to build a new communication pattern in the group around a theme identified as highly relevant by its members;
- Undoing mind reads and negative predictions;
- Introducing "fork-in-the-road" by asking members if they'd rather continue to make negative predictions or explore and make realistic plans;
- On the second day, vectoring the group toward short term goals to plan in the here and now for a realistic future, instead of making negative predictions;
- Making space in the agenda to work unplanned issues relevant for the team (a member informed the team that he was leaving the company;)
- Ensuring that all voices were heard, by inviting silent subgroups to speak.

I went home after the fourth day of the assignment at ease and starting to "really" believe that I would not be the third consultant to be fired from the assignment. I will continue this case discussion in the next issue of the SCTRI Newsletter.

-Katarina Billman

THUMBNAIL SKETCHES

VIGNETTES FROM THE YORK TRAINING WEEK

For me it was a delight- meeting both groups, the many different people, and my self. I am almost overwhelmed with learnings, surprises, etc., so which ones to choose? Well - I see my self as a quite experienced person in terms of psychotherapy - and in SCT, I - surprisingly - found what I have been searching for, for years. A group therapeutic theory, practice and environments, that feels healing for me - and I am sure, for others too - a system that helps me move forward, and allows me to explore the fact of being a human being, with all that it involves, without being told that I am a failure. It is my experience that this helps me to grow, whatever that is. Helps me dare to (again) be curious about what it is that life brings me, and how to respond truly to whatever comes.

In York (this time), I (most of the time) was waving on the edge of the unknown. I could not think, I could not understand, I felt somehow lost, and at the same time excited. The concrete outcome I felt on my way home: The train from York to Peterborough was delayed, so that I could not reach the train for Stansted. And I had to, there was no other way to get home. I became tense, nervous, and then came: "Facts first!" Next was a headache coming, and I thought: "Have fun." After I succeeded in this, the ticket controller came back and told me that the train would be at Peterborough, so I had 4 minutes to change trains. And I had fun!

-Helle Johnsen, Denmark

I am still struggling for words to describe my experience in York, but maybe this is what I learned most of all - not to start with the words. When I think of last week I smile, and look forward to another SCT experience soon.

-Susan Baxter, Scotland

The SCT Training Week, at University of York, September 8-15 has been an awakening experience to the depth and variety of human contexts for me. York's history, as part of the Roman Empire (under Emperors Constantius and Constantine

303-326 AD), and as a seat of civilization for the past 1800 years, enriched to a palpable level my connection to culture and a deeper sense of humanness. For me, the 2006 Training Week was nested in a deep context of human experience.

The 2006 Training Week included a multinational representation of learners at all levels of SCT work. Among the 25 attendees, Bettie Banks and I represented the U.S., with representatives from the U.K., Sweden, Denmark, Belarus, Portugal and Canada. Pre-Conference attendees reported that Una McCluskey led a substantive workshop on Attachment Theory and SCT on Friday and Saturday, September 8-9. From September 11-15, Ray Haddock, Susan Gantt and Fran Carter led the five-day training, including Foundation, Intermediate Experiential/Leadership and Skills training.

One of the more interesting dynamics of the training was the fact that each of the learning groups moved through similar group developmental experiences as the days progressed. These experiences found integration in the Large Group-as-a-Whole at the end of the day, led by Susan Gantt and Fran Carter.

As Conference Administrator, Liza Bingley Miller made registration simple and comfortable. The breaks and refreshments were plenty and creative. The available written resources included the classic and new texts from SCT authors Agazarian, Gantt, and McCluskey. I particularly enjoyed the SCT group supper at Mason's Restaurant Thursday evening.

I am grateful for the work of the York Committee for making this time together rich in context, learning, and fellowship.

-Fred L. Smoot

EXPANDING INTEREST IN SCT

There is interest in SCT brewing amongst the Clinical Pastoral Education Supervisors in Training (SIT) in Atlanta, Georgia. Cynthia Vaughan and I spent several hours introducing the SIT's to a taste of SCT. Out of the eleven students present, there were at least half who were interested in knowing more about SCT and/or in receiving training in SCT.

-Mary Crist Brown

THE MAY 16, 2006 SUMMIT:

A Report from the Atlanta Training Group Volunteer Representative

I think it is important that I clarify the context for this report. I have been a member of the monthly Atlanta training group since approximately 1998. My relationship with SCT as an organization started approximately one year prior to joining the organization when I attended a weekend Foundation Group workshop. At the time of the workshop, I was in my second year of graduate school working toward my Psy.D. I had impulsively signed up for the workshop, like the Nike motto, "Just Do It," after observing Susan Gantt lead a demonstration group in my Group Psychotherapy course at school. Or it may be an impulse containment deficit. The bottom line is that I did not have a clue what I was getting into.

As usual, I arrived early so that I would be better able to manage my not yet named "turbulence at the boundary." I picked up my packet of workshop information, sat down, and I began to read the SCT material. Within 30 seconds I was perspiring profusely, my heart was pounding, and I could barely breathe. The impulse to flee was huge. The material had made it clear to me that I would not be able to sit back, listen, and be left alone. However, I was committed to staying and doing the work. I would manage my anxiety and collect my CEU's.

I would like to tell you that on the morning of May 16, 2006, I had a totally different experience at the Summit. However, as a first-time Summit representative of the Atlanta training group, the "fight or flight" response was present. I gave myself a little kick for impulsively volunteering for a role without collecting much data. However, I showed myself a little compassion by remembering the context in which I volunteered. I am very much aware of the interpersonal and intrapersonal costs associated with not fully taking up my role in multiple areas of life including my role as a training group member. By volunteering, I was exploring a new path. I centered myself, identified my negative predictions, and reminded myself that I could not tell the future.

As I quietly sat at the "edge of the unknown" nurturing a sense of curiosity, other training group representatives began to join in on the call. I found myself working hard to stay curious. As I started to subgroup for my very first time over a telephone (didn't Madonna have a song about the very first time?), I noticed my "mind reads" were increasing. I oriented myself to role, goal, and context. The subgrouping became comfortable and reassuring. I was able to be fully present as a representative of our group.

The overall theme that emerged in the Summit was managing the boundaries between training groups, SCTRI, and the wider world. A discussion of boundaries led to a recognition that boundaries are often used to manage group dynamics as well in the service of the system's goals.

I was thoroughly satisfied with the subgrouping that took place during the Summit. It felt good to take up an SCTRI role that contributed to the organization and my training group. However, it was also at this point that I began to realize that I might have a problem.

The conference call highlighted the importance of

boundaries, bringing information across boundaries, and the different ways a system can manage boundaries when dealing with reality. I was holding information/data from the Summit without a sanctioned way to bring SCTRI information into the training group. I was not clear on my "job description" as a volunteer representative. This increased the likelihood of unintended consequences if I did not bring the information across the boundary intelligently.

I reviewed my options and, as usual, did not think about using my human resources. I traveled back into the past for examples of times when outside information needed to come across the boundary into our group. I identified the following methods:

1. Flyers on the floor in the middle of the circle for those who are interested;
2. Group e-mail;
3. Bring it up during a break;
4. Bringing it in as a "distraction;"
5. Asking the group for permission to make a slight change to the structure of the training so that the information could be brought in;
6. Bringing the information in within the context of Leadership Training;
7. Bringing the information in within the context of Consultation during the training;
8. Using the experiential portion of training to process as a group the relationship that we have with SCTRI.

I quickly rejected the flyers on the floor. Although I did not know what to do with the information, I apprehensively knew the middle of the floor was not the way to go. I also dropped the group e-mail idea. There was an emotional piece associated with the information that increased the likelihood that the e-mail would be misconstrued. Bringing it in at the "break" was not appropriate nor was the information a "distraction." I'm not too sure why I did not ask to change the structure of the training to allow time to bring the outside information in. Perhaps, I was stuck in an old role?

I thought that using the leadership portion or the consultation portion of the training were creative ways to bring the information into the training group. However, I was really curious (or, lacking common sense?) about what would happen if I brought the information in during the experiential. "Enough," I said to myself. "Just Do It! You will think yourself to death."

I brought the information in during the opening moments of the experiential portion of the training. I used my typical vague and ambiguous methods to communicate. Einstein once said that, "The definition of insanity is trying the same thing over and over again expecting different results." I am in his subgroup assuming he was talking from his own experience.

It would have been interesting to track the way the group processed the information that I brought across the boundary. However, it took all my resources to not take the group reaction just personally. Fortunately, our group leader was able to lead us through many of the issues aroused by my misguided efforts. In fact, we spent the balance of the afternoon building a working group and maintaining a working group through identifying and reducing the forces that get in our way.

I still do not have the relationship that I desire with my training group, SCTRI, myself, or the world at-large. However, I am very grateful that I have a context that allows me to learn about myself as a living human system nestled within and relating to other living human systems. I am confident that I will discover more and more of the alternate path that will lead me out of Einstein's subgroup.

-Neal Cohen

A PROPOSAL

I think SCT group participants could use more help in applying and adapting what they (we) learn in group to "real life." One way to do that would be to periodically have a brief "surprises, learnings, satisfactions, and dissatisfactions" conversation around "your experience in using SCT principles outside of group" just before the experiential session. Simply announcing in advance the institution of such a procedure may vector participants' outside-group energy toward SCT goals. In addition, group members might learn from others' experience, and group leaders might obtain additional information about where the group's work is.

I'm hoping to get group buy-in to try this procedure in our training group soon.

-Mark L. Perlmutter

NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM MEMBERS

Katherine, A. (2006). *How to make almost any diet work: Repair your disordered appetite and finally lose weight.* Center City, MN: Hazelden Publishing.

Macpherson, P. & Ford, D. (Eds.) (2006). *Schooled in diversity action research: Student and African-American alumni collaboration for school change.* Prepared for publication by McHenry, I., Sweeney-Denham, S. & Adess, A. Philadelphia: Friends Council on Education.

Ward, P. (2006). Using your self in the service of others. In A. Bernstein (Ed.), *The Birkman reader.* Houston: Birkman International.

METAMORPHOSIS

choking for air
she struggles to carry her fragile voice
across an illusory boundary that she imagines others
intentionally or unintentionally
create and reinforce
she predicts that her anemic voice
once launched
will shatter the air like breaking glass
SHOCKING
stirring the old pot of shame
yet again.

have i said something wrong? do i sound stupid?
does anyone even care what i have to say?

having stuck her head out too far
and sensing danger
both real and imagined
she hastily retreats back inside her cold, lonely shell

unable to bear the unintended consent of silence
and tormented by the hypocrisy of imagined judgments
she finally pushes her voice out with exhausting energy
and the nagging fear
that the caged monster inside her will erupt
and once unleashed
lash out with its poisonous tongue
destroying rules/ chewing up boundaries
vomiting up an angry river filled with spite and judgments
stretching for miles/ overflowing with resentments

instead
a very small yet remarkably strong voice emerges
stating simply

I am what I am.

-Julie Mallory Church

SCT PROGRAM NOTES

This section contains official information about the evolving SCT training program. In this issue we are revisiting the Intermediate level of SCT training, as a resource for members who are moving into this level. Visit the SCTRI website (www.systemscentered.com) for more information.

INTRODUCTION TO INTERMEDIATE TRAINING

Intermediate training is the boundary between members using SCT for their general knowledge and personal growth, and making the commitment to practice in the spirit and discipline of systems-centered practice. The goal of working in training groups at the Foundation level is to experience the apprehensive impact of subgrouping and to get into the habit of

undoing one's own anxiety, tension, depression and/or outrages and role locks. Intermediate level training shifts focus to learning how to use these skills with others, in context, and means applying them in selected cases with consultation from a licensed SCT Practitioner. You are ready to make the transition to Intermediate level training when you have had sufficient work in an SCT experiential training group to have the ability to contain your own authority issue and pull to role locks sufficiently to cooperate in learning and teaching others. Entering Intermediate training also requires a commitment to take up SCT as a primary orientation in your practice, and membership in SCTRI. The first two learning environments specific to Intermediate training are the Intermediate Skills Training and work in the Container Role. If you are beginning to feel ready or want to get ready to enter Intermediate training, talk to your primary training group leader and other trainers you have worked with to begin to assess your readiness.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL SCT TRAINING

If you are curious about your next steps for training, wondering if you are ready for Intermediate training, or simply want a “bird’s eye view” of our training program, there are several places to go for information. You can approach any SCT Trainer (check the website for names and numbers), you can take a look at the Training Overview and you can also check the Notice Board. (These last two are in the Newsletter and on the web at www.systemscentered.com.)

And with all that, here are the building blocks of Intermediate Training:

Ongoing membership in training, theory, leadership, consultation and application groups that continue to support integration and practical mastery in the four basic areas of our training program – theoretical knowledge, personal development, technical skill and observation/research. Work in the container role in experiential groups is a transition role from member to leader (see article below).

The Intermediate Skills Training: This is a 5-day intensive skill training that focuses on introducing the SCT protocol of defense modification in Modules I and II. This training is designed to formally shift the focus from work with oneself to work with others. There is an emphasis on the theoretical context within which the protocol is used, the actual steps in each technical skill that make up the protocol, videotaped practice of each skill and review of each videotaped section with an eye on building the skill of force field development. A telephone follow-up series is designed to support members in integrating the skills they have learned. (There is an application process for this training.)

The Mentor Training: This is a 6-day intensive training that builds on and reinforces the learning from the Intermediate Skills Training with further theoretical discussion, skill building, videotaped practicum session and force field review. The focus of this training is to enhance the capacity to contextualize, understand what it means to develop a “systems-centered learning organization,” orient to different contexts within the “organization,” relate to the goal of the context and take up one’s functional role. This training builds on prior mastery of the SCT protocol set out in the “Gold Sheets.” (There is an application process for this training.)

The Authority Issue Group: Membership in this intensive training involves making a commitment to membership in a group that meets twice a year for approximately 3 years.

The actual length of time depends on the work of the group itself. In this experiential training, the emphasis is placed on using the SCT methods with attunement, building a working group and the exploration of Module III defenses – the Authority Issue, crisis of hatred, stubbornness and resistance to change, and related issues of giving and taking authority. (There is an application process for this training.)

When members complete these training blocks they are ready to consider Advanced Training options.

-Fran Carter

WHY THE CONTAINER ROLE IN INTERMEDIATE TRAINING?

In Foundation level work in SCT the focus is on learning to use the skills and methods of SCT with oneself. The shift in Intermediate level training is toward using SCT skills with others. The container role is a transition: one works in an experiential group as a member, but with an eye on the development of the group. From the side of the group development, the “containers” in the group ensure that no member goes without a subgroup, by joining any lone voice, authentically and with resonance. From the side of the person in the container role, the learning is to shift focus from personal work to the work of resonating with the group-as-a-whole. This shift is a foundation for taking up the role of leader.

This role thus serves a dual function. It both facilitates subgrouping, especially important in a foundation group, and it provides a unique training opportunity for members to take up specific aspects of leadership without taking on the whole leader role. At the intermediate level of training, as we shift contexts from membership to leadership, our work is to connect emotionally not just with a subset of the group in resonance with our personal experience at the moment; we now need to be able to resonate with, attune to, every voice that comes into the group. This is exactly the skill that container training allows us to practice. First, the container sits at the edge of the unknown, working to stay present and oriented to the role. This often requires silently undoing anxiety and tension so that apprehensive experience is accessible. Then, every time a member speaks, the container drops down into apprehensive experience and finds an authentic version of the experience and prepares to bring it in at approximately the same depth and tone of feeling, if the member isn’t joined by another group member.

The work in the container role is not to deepen the subgroup but rather to provide a containment for exactly where it is. In fact, if a member is taking a deep sea dive and starting to flood with feeling, the container may come in at the shallow end of the experience, rather than go down with them. Likewise, if a member is bringing in a voice that’s out of alignment with the direction the leader is taking, the work is to contain and lighten that voice, possibly bridging to the work of the group.

Clearly, this role is an opportunity to develop skills in resonance, attunement and joining. In any event that offers the container role, participants are oriented to the role prior to any experiential work, and meet together during the training event to process both their learnings and the problems in them that arise as they take on this role.

This is a vital element of Intermediate training and is offered regularly in the Philadelphia Fall Weekend Workshop and will be available at the Annual Conference in Boston this year in both the weekend Foundation Institute and the 5-day Conference Foundation Training Group. Additionally, there is a two-day European training in Stockholm each winter and the week-long training in New York.

-Susan Cassano

Notice Board

Systems-Centered® Training

Training Events and Workshops 2006



November 2006 Update

Notice Board Updates on the web at www.systemscentered.com

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ATLANTA

MONTHLY TRAINING GROUP

with Susan Gantt

SCT group with theory, leadership, group practicum and consultation.

- **Where:** 18 Lenox Pointe, NE, Ste. A, Atlanta
- **When:** 12:15-5:30 PM, One Friday a month
- **Registration:** \$150 per meeting
- **Dates:** Dec. 8, Jan. 12, Feb. 9, Mar. 2, Apr. 6, May 11, June 1, Aug. 3, Sept. 21, Oct. 5, Nov. 2, Dec. 14
- **Contact:** Susan Gantt (404) 261-5559 x1 or sgantt@systemscentered.com

ONGOING TRAINING GROUP

with Susan Gantt

- **Where:** 18 Lenox Pointe, NE, Ste. A, Atlanta
- **When:** 4:00-5:20 PM, Every other Monday (call for dates)
- **Registration:** \$40 per meeting
- **Contact:** Susan Gantt (404) 261-5559 x1 or sgantt@systemscentered.com

AUSTIN

MONDAY INTERMEDIATE TRAINING GROUP

with Rich Armington

Group practicum, theory and skill building.

- **Where:** 2525 Wallingwood Drive, Ste. 701, Austin
- **When:** 1:00-2:30 PM, Weekly
- **Registration:** \$45 per meeting
- **Contact:** Rich Armington (512) 306-0166 or armington@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY CONSULTATION GROUP

with Rich Armington & Susan Cassano

Applications of the Theory of Living Human Systems to work settings.

- **Where:** 2525 Wallingwood Drive, Ste. 701, Austin
- **When:** 9:00-10:00 AM, 1st & 3rd Wednesdays
- **Contact:** Rich Armington (512) 306-0166 or armington@gmail.com or Susan Cassano (512) 327-4170 or susancassano@sbcglobal.net

WEDNESDAY FOUNDATION TRAINING GROUP

with Linda Solomon Scott & Sydnor Sikes

- **Where:** 508 Deep Eddy, Suite 1-A, Austin
- **When:** 2:00-3:30 PM, Weekly
- **Registration:** \$40 per meeting members; \$45 per meeting non-members
- **Contact:** Linda Scott Solomon (512) 327-3408 or lscott1244@yahoo.com or Sydnor Sikes (512) 469-0582 or sydnorsikes@earthlink.net

THURSDAY FOUNDATION TRAINING GROUP

with Sydnor Sikes & Joy Luther

Weekly 90 minute sessions to include didactic and group practicum.

- **Where:** 508 Deep Eddy, Suite 1-A, Austin
- **When:** 12:30-2:00 PM, Weekly
- **Registration:** \$40 per meeting members; \$45 per meeting non-members
- **Contact:** Sydnor Sikes (512) 469-0582 or sydnorsikes@earthlink.net or Joy Luther (512) 343-9609 or joyluthersoffice@aol.com

BOSTON

FOUNDATION TRAINING GROUP

with Fran Carter

- **Where:** 86 Boston Ave., West Medford
- **When:** 9:00-12:00 noon, First Sunday of each month
- **Registration:** \$80 per meeting
- **Contact:** Fran Carter (215) 988-9523 or carter2229@aol.com

ONGOING TRAINING GROUP

with Fran Carter & Steve Weinstein

Group practicum with lecture.

- **Where:** 86 Boston Ave., West Medford
- **When:** 1:45-4:45 PM, First Sunday of each month
- **Registration:** \$80 per meeting
- **Contact:** Steve Weinstein (781) 488-3613 or sweinst949@aol.com

CONSULTATION GROUP

with Fran Carter

- **Where:** 86 Boston Ave., West Medford
- **When:** 12:15-1:30 PM, First Sunday of each month
- **Registration:** \$35 per meeting
- **Contact:** Fran Carter (215) 988-9523 or carter2229@aol.com

SCT CONFERENCE 2007

- **Where:** Holiday Inn, Brookline, MA
- **When:** Institute Mar. 24-25, Conference Mar. 26-30
- **Early Registration before Feb. 28:** Members: Institutes \$375, Conference \$575 Non-members: Institutes \$400, Conference \$600
- **Hotel Accommodations:** Discounted rate \$139 until Mar. 1. Reservations: (617) 277-1200
- **Contact:** Jan Quirl (512) 326-5569 or jquir1@austin.rr.com or John Straznickas (415) 522-9700 or john.straznickas@med.va.gov

ENGLAND

EUROPEAN TRAINING GROUP

with Ray Haddock

- **Where:** Near Kings Cross Station, London
- **When:** 09:00-17:00, Fridays
- **Dates:** Dec. 15, Feb 9, Apr. 20, June 8, July 13
- **Registration:** £130 per meeting
- **Contact:** Ray Haddock +44 (0) 114 271 6894 or ray.haddock@tiscali.co.uk

THE SYSTEMS-CENTERED APPROACH

with Yvonne Agazarian & Susan Gantt

- **Where:** Lansdowne Club, 9 Fitzmaurice Place, London
- **When:** June 18-22, 2007
The Systems-Centered Approach to Organizations (June 18-19)
How to Develop Systems-Centered Groups (June 18-19)
Intermediate SCT: Exploration of Roles (June 20-22)
- **Contact:** Madeline O'Carroll madathome.moc @virgin.net

ANNUAL SYSTEMS-CENTERED TRAINING WEEK

with Yvonne Agazarian, Fran Carter, Susan Gantt, Ray Haddock, Una McCluskey & Staff

- **Where:** Kings Manor, University of York, Exhibition Square
- **When:** Sept. 10-14, 2007
- **Contact:** Liza Bingley Miller +44 (0) 1904 633 417 or liza.miller@btinternet.com

HOUSTON

INTRODUCTORY TRAINING WORKSHOP

with Susan Lange

- **Where:** Interface-Samaritan Counseling Center, 4803 San Felipe St.
- **When:** 10:30-2:00 PM, Third Friday of each month
- **Registration:** \$1,000 per meeting divided by participants
- **Contact:** Susan Lange (713) 626-7990 x209 or slange@interface-samaritan.com

NEW YORK

FIRST WEDNESDAY:

INTERMEDIATE TRAINING

with Yvonne Agazarian & Fran Carter

- **Where:** Washington Square Institute, 41 E. 11th, 4th floor, NYC 10003
- **When:** Theory: 10:00-11:30 AM Consultation Group: 12:15-1:45 PM Group Practicum (invitation only): 2:00-4:00 PM First Wednesday of each month except Aug. & Sept.
- **Registration:** Fees are based on rate of \$70/hour with a discount for members.
- **Contact:** Yvonne Agazarian (215) 561-7428 or agazarian@aol.com or Fran Carter (215) 988-9523 or carter2229@aol.com

FIRST THURSDAY:

FOUNDATION TRAINING

with Yvonne Agazarian & Fran Carter

- **Where:** Washington Square Institute, 41 E. 11th, 4th floor, NYC 10003
- **When:** Group Practicum: 8:30-12:30 PM Leadership Practicum: 1:15-2:45 PM Consultation: 3:00-4:30 PM First Thursday of each month (after the first Wednesday) except Aug. & Sept.
- **Registration:** Fees are based on rate of \$70/hour with a discount for members.
- **Contact:** Yvonne Agazarian (215) 561-7428 or agazarian@aol.com or Fran Carter (215) 988-9523 or carter2229@aol.com

FIRST FRIDAY: TRAINING GROUP

with Yvonne Agazarian

- This is a closed training group.
- **Where:** Washington Square Institute, 41 E. 11th, 4th floor, NYC 10003
- **When:** First Friday of each month (after the first Wednesday) except Aug. & Sept.
- **Contact:** Yvonne Agazarian (215) 561-7428 or agazarian@aol.com

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www.systemscentered.com

FRIDAY ONGOING FOUNDATION TRAINING GROUP

with Fran Carter

- **Where:** 144 East 55th St., NYC
- **When:** 2:00-5:00 PM, one Friday each month except Aug. & Sept. (call for dates)
- **Registration:** \$110 per meeting
- **Contact:** Fran Carter (215) 988-9523 or carter2229@aol.com

PHILADELPHIA

FIRST MONDAY: SAMPLING SCT

with Yvonne Agazarian

Everybody is welcome to attend an introductory "explaining and exploring" of the SCT experience. Container Role training available for experienced SCT members.

- **Where:** Philadelphia County Medical Society, 21st & Spring Garden Streets (on-site parking)
- **When:** 6:00-9:00 PM, First Monday of each month except for Aug. & Sept. (if holiday, 2nd Monday)
- **Registration:** \$50 per meeting
- **Contact:** Yvonne Agazarian (215) 561-7428 or agazarian@aol.com

MONDAY ONGOING GROUP PRACTICUM

with Yvonne Agazarian

- **Where:** Philadelphia County Medical Society, 21st & Spring Garden Streets (on-site parking)
- **When:** 6:00-7:30 PM, Every Monday (First Monday optional)
- **Registration:** \$150 per month members, \$175 per month non-members
- **Contact:** Yvonne Agazarian (215) 561-7428 or agazarian@aol.com

MONDAY TRAINING GROUPS

- **Where:** Philadelphia County Medical Society, 21st & Spring Garden Streets (on-site parking)
- **When:** 4:30-5:45 PM
Second Monday: Theory with Fran Carter
Fifth Monday: SAVI with Anita Simon
Does not meet in Aug.
- **Registration:** \$37.50 per meeting
- **Contact:** Fran Carter (215) 988-9523 or carter2229@aol.com or Anita Simon (215) 561-3431 or anitasimon@savicomunications.com

THIRD WEDNESDAY: TRAINING GROUP

with Yvonne Agazarian

- Intermediate membership by invitation only.
- **Where:** 1831 Chestnut Street, Ste. 801
- **When:** 10:30-12:30 PM, Third Wednesday of each month except Aug.
- **Registration:** \$100
- **Contact:** Yvonne Agazarian (215) 561-7428 or agazarian@aol.com

THURSDAY FOUNDATION TRAINING GROUP

with Claudia Byram

- **Where:** 1831 Chestnut Street, Ste. 801
- **When:** 8:00-9:30 AM, 2nd & 4th Thursdays (unless otherwise noted on website)
- **Registration:** \$75 per month members, \$80 per month non-members
- **Contact:** Claudia Byram (215) 561-0341 or claudia.byram@verizon.net

LAST FRIDAY: INTERMEDIATE TRAINING DAY

with Yvonne Agazarian

- **Where:** 1831 Chestnut Street, Ste. 801
- **When:** Theory Group: 12:00-1:15 PM
Consultation: 1:40-2:40 PM
Leadership Practicum: 2:45-4:00 PM
Ongoing Group Practicum & Review (by invitation only): 4:15-5:45 PM
Does not meet in Jan. & Aug.
- **Registration:** Full day \$160 per month members, \$175 per month non-members
- **Contact:** Yvonne Agazarian (215) 561-7428 or agazarian@aol.com

SAVI WORKSHOPS

See listings under "SAVI Trainings"

SAN FRANCISCO TRAINING GROUP

with Susan Gantt

- **Where:** Fort Mason Center, Rm. C-230
- **When:** 3:00-6:00 PM, Thursdays
- **Dates:** Jan. 18, Feb. 15, Apr. 12, May 17, June 7, Aug. 16, Oct. 11, Dec. 6
- **Contact:** Susan Gantt (404) 261-5559 x1 or sgantt@systemscentered.com

TRAINING DAY

with Susan Gantt

- Group practicum, leadership, consultation.
- **When:** 9:00-5:00 PM, Fridays
- **Dates:** Jan. 19, Feb. 16, Apr. 13, May 18, June 8, Aug. 17, Oct. 12, Dec. 7
- **Contact:** Peter Bernhardt (510) 526-5727 or biousa@mindspring.com

BAY AREA PHONE STUDY/ EXPLORATION GROUP

with Fran Carter & Susan Gantt

- **When:** 8:00-9:00 AM PT, First Friday of each month
Meetings are on the SCTRI telephone bridge. Call 1-641-793-7018 PIN 181505# at the appointed time. (You pay your own long distance charges.)
- **Contact:** John Straznickas (415) 522-9700 or john.straznickas@med.va.gov

SWEDEN

SCT TRAINING GROUP

with Ray Haddock

- **Where:** IOGT-NTO Gården, Klara Södra Kyrkogata 20
- **When:** 08:30-17:00, One Friday every 2 months
- **Dates:** Dec. 8, Jan. 19, Mar. 9, May 11
- **Registration:** £150 per meeting
- **Contact:** Ray Haddock +44 (0) 114 271 6894 or ray.haddock@sct.nhs.uk

SYSTEMS-CENTERED TRAINING WORKSHOPS

with Susan Gantt & Ray Haddock

- **Where:** Stockholm
- **When:** Jan. 29-31, 2007
Jan. 29: How to Work Smarter: Building Emotional Intelligence in Organizations, In Meetings, and in Workgroups;
Jan. 30-31: Building a Systems-Centered Group: Foundation & Intermediate Training
- **Registration:** By Dec. 15: 1-day workshop – 2000 SEK, 2-day workshop – 3500 SEK; After Dec. 15: 1-day workshop – 2375 SEK, 2-day workshop – 4025 SEK. 10% discount for attending both workshops.
- **Contact:** Susan Gantt (404) 261-5559 x1 or sgantt@systemscentered.com or Erica Ekedahl +46 (70) 749 5516 or info@humannature.se

SAVI TRAININGS

SAVI BASIC SKILLS SEMINAR

with Claudia Byram & Fran Carter

SAVI Level: Foundation & Intermediate.

- **When:** 8:00-9:30 AM ET
- **Dates:** Dec. 15; Spring 2007 dates to be announced
Meetings are on the SAVI telephone bridge. Call 1-620-635-9555 PIN 35994# at the appointed time. (You pay your own long distance charges.)
- **Registration:** \$210 for the 5 session series
- **Contact:** Claudia Byram (215) 561-0341 or claudia.byram@verizon.net or Fran Carter (215) 988-9523 or carter2229@aol.com

SAVI APPLICATION SEMINAR: SAVI AND SCT

with Anita Simon and Claudia Byram

- **When:** 10:00-11:30 AM ET, One Friday each month.
- **Dates:** Dec. 15, Jan. 19, Feb. 16, Mar. 16, Apr. 20, May 18, June 20
Meetings are on SAVI telephone bridge. Call 1-641-793-7018 PIN 181505# at the appointed time. (You pay your own long distance charges.)
- **Registration:** \$45 per meeting
- **Contact:** Claudia Byram (215) 561-0341 or claudia.byram@verizon.net

PUTTING YOUR SAVI KNOWLEDGE TO WORK!

with Anita Simon

- **Where:** Philadelphia
- **When:** Dec. 8-9, 2006
- **Registration:** \$360 before Nov. 15, \$400 after Nov. 15
- **Contact:** Ben Benjamin (617) 576-0555 or bb@mtti.com

SCTRI Telephone Bridge
1-641-793-7018
PIN 181505#

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www.systemscentered.com

SAVI ADVANCED TRAINING – COHORT II

with *Claudia Byram & Fran Carter*

SAVI skills seminar and/or SAVI skills in an SCT context.

- **Where:** Philadelphia
- **When:** Feb. 10-12, 2007
- **Registration:** \$600
- **Contact:** Claudia Byram (215) 561-0341 or claudia.byram@verizon.net

SEEING COMMUNICATION PATTERNS, NOT PEOPLE

with *Fran Carter & Claudia Byram*

Using SAVI to shift context.

- **Where:** Philadelphia
- **When:** May 19-20, 2007
- **Registration:** \$400
- **Contact:** Claudia Byram (215) 561-0341 or claudia.byram@verizon.net or Fran Carter (215) 988-9523 or carter2229@aol.com

SCT PHONE SEMINARS

For seminars on the SCTR I phone bridge line, call 1-641-793-7018 PIN 181505# at the appointed time. You pay your own long distance charges.

ADVANCED SEMINARS

with *Yvonne Agazarian*

For members who are licensed or in the Authority or Licensing groups.

- **When:** 2nd Thursday of each month (unless otherwise noted)
Series 1: 8:00-9:15 AM ET “Theory of Living Human Systems”
Series 2: 9:20-10:35 AM ET “Systems-Centered Practice”
- **Registration:** \$350 per series, paid in advance. 15% discount for taking both. Send check payable to Yvonne Agazarian, 553 Judson St., Philadelphia, PA 19130 USA
- **Contact:** Yvonne Agazarian (215) 561-7428 or agazarian@aol.com

FOUNDATION THEORY GROUP

with *Fran Carter & Susan Gantt*

- **When:** 10:05-11:00 AM ET, 2nd Wednesday of each month
- **Registration:** \$35 per meeting. Send check payable to Susan Gantt, 18 Lenox Pointe, NE, Ste. A, Atlanta, GA 30324 USA
- **Contact:** Fran Carter (215) 988-9523 or carter2229@aol.com or Susan Gantt (404) 261-5559 x1 or sgantt@systemscentered.com

INTERMEDIATE THEORY GROUP

with *Fran Carter & Susan Gantt*

- **When:** 9:00-10:00 AM ET, 2nd Wednesday of each month
- **Registration:** \$35 per meeting. Send check payable to Susan Gantt, 18 Lenox Pointe, NE, Ste. A, Atlanta, GA 30324 USA
- **Contact:** Fran Carter (215) 988-9523 or carter2229@aol.com or Susan Gantt (404) 261-5559 x1 or sgantt@systemscentered.com

DROP-IN STUDY GROUP

- **When:** 12:00-1:00 PM ET, 3rd Friday of each month
- Any member can come, any time, as a benefit of membership.
- The Study Group is a place where members can interact around questions, ideas, curiosities, areas of interest about the Theory of Living Human Systems and Systems-Centered methods & techniques. A licensed or license-qualified SCT member will attend each meeting to convene & mentor the group.

APPLICATIONS GROUP FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CONSULTANTS AND EDUCATORS

with *Susan Gantt*

- **When:** 12:00-1:00 PM ET, One Monday each month
- **Dates:** Dec. 11, Jan. 15, Feb. 12, Mar. 12, Apr. 9, May 14
- Using the theory and methods of SCT, the group explores specific applications and examples from members’ experiences. The group works with the issues that are surfaced by the group, such as assessing the work that is appropriate to the context and the goal of the context or integrating the SCT methods with the language of the context.

- **Registration:** \$30 per meeting. Send check payable to Susan Gantt, 18 Lenox Pointe, NE, Ste. A, Atlanta, GA 30324 USA
- **Contact:** Susan Gantt (404) 261-5559 x1 or sgantt@systemscentered.com

EUROPEAN CONSULTATION GROUP

with *Susan Gantt*

- **When:** 8PM GMT, 2nd & 4th Tuesday each month
- **Registration:** £25 (€36 or \$44) per meeting. Send payment to Susan Gantt, 18 Lenox Pointe NE, Ste. A, Atlanta, GA 30324 USA
- **Contact:** Susan Gantt (404) 261-5559 x1 or sgantt@systemscentered.com

SAVI SEMINARS

See listings under “SAVI Trainings”

BAY AREA PHONE STUDY/ EXPLORATION GROUP

See listing under “San Francisco”

SCTR I MANAGEMENT GROUP

SCTR I Management Group members only.

- **Spring:** Apr. 19-22, 2007
- **Fall:** Oct. 19-22, 2007
- **Where:** The Racquet Club of Philadelphia, 215 S. 16th St.
- **Contact:** Eileen Jones (212) 673-4968 or [persshore@aol.com](mailto:pershore@aol.com)

All fees listed for training groups are for members of the Systems-Centered® Training and Research Institute. Non-member fees are:

- 90 minute training groups are an additional \$5.
- Half-day or Full-day events are an additional \$25.

MARK YOUR CALENDERS NOW FOR CONFERENCE 2007!

BOSTON, MA

Pre-Conference Institutes:

March 24-25, 2007

5-Day Conference:

March 26-30, 2007

Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced training tracks available.

Note: Psychology guidelines suggest we substitute the word “consultation” for “supervision.” Supervision is reserved for supervisors who are taking legal responsibility for the supervisee’s cases.

**SCTR I Telephone Bridge
1-641-793-7018
PIN 181505#**

**Notice Board Updates on the web
www.systemscentered.com**

SYSTEMS-CENTERED® TRAINING PROGRAM

SCT TRAINING OVERVIEW

There is a wide variety of training opportunities at the four levels of training described below, as well as specialty training with SAVI (a communications model) and with SCT applied to couples and organizations.

Systems-centered training combines group work practicum (where you learn by working as a member of a group), and theoretical and technical training. You can learn about SCT by attending training events at the level that matches your interest and resources, i.e., time, energy and money. These training tracks range from exploring SCT to making a commitment to formal training. The approach to training is functional with less emphasis on “checking off” certain experiences and more on mastering the theory, methods, and techniques at each level of training.

Levels of SCT Training: *Exploration, Foundation Training, Intermediate Training, and Advanced Training.*

Exploring SCT: For Curious People

In exploring SCT you can attend foundation or specialized training events once or as many times as you find useful. Some find the training group valuable for their own development; others want to learn the theoretical approach well enough to compare it to their own; others use elements of theory and technique in their current practical applications. At this level of participation, you are your own guide, sipping or drinking deeply as your interests and resources permit.

Foundation Training: For Learning SCT

Some people discover enough value in SCT theory and practice to consider making SCT a primary orientation to their work. The Foundation training emphasizes learning to use SCT methods with one’s self and gaining the personal development and training that comes from working in an ongoing training group with sufficient intensity to explore and contain one’s own issues with authority. At a minimum, a training group and some work with theory are foundations to further work in SCT. If you find yourself exploring this shift into more structured training, you should make contact with an SCT Mentor to find out more about the training process.

Intermediate Training

Intermediate training is for those interested in using SCT as their major theoretical orientation and work toward the goal of becoming a licensed systems-centered practitioner. Members apply for Intermediate training experience after having learned to use SCT as a training group member, to understand basic SCT theory, and to understand and contain the dynamics of their own authority issue. The Intermediate level of training introduces more

focus on theory, on the technical skills of SCT, on managing role boundaries, and on containing the dynamics of a system. Intermediate training includes the Intermediate Skills Training, the Intermediate Mentor Training, and the Authority Issue Group. The Skills Training focuses on the technical skills of defense modification in Modules I and II. The Intermediate Mentor Training focuses on the management of oneself in relation to changing roles and contexts. The Authority Issue Group is a training group working the issues of Module III in depth. At the Intermediate level, participants also work in a Theory group and in an ongoing Consultation group in addition to their ongoing training group.

Advanced Training

Advanced training activities emphasize integrating comprehensive and apprehensive knowledge in role, and related to goal and context in application settings. One major advanced training track is working as a member of a peer licensing group to build a working group, develop criteria for assessment, and implement a peer assessment process. Joining the Management Group is another context for advanced training. An advanced training track is also offered at the annual conference for post-Authority group members and a special advanced training group is offered each summer. Advanced members also work with mentors to develop training opportunities.

USE OF THE SCT® TRADEMARK

Only licensed practitioners of SCT can call themselves **Systems-Centered** anything!

All others call themselves **systems-oriented** and **MUST** be careful not to link that nomenclature to SCT or Systems-Centered.

Anyone who wants to use SCT materials or the terms *SCT*, *Systems-Centered* or *Systems-Centered Therapy*, and who is not licensed, must apply for a project license by contacting the trademark holders, Yvonne Agazarian or Susan Gantt (in SCTRI Director role).

SCT[®]RI REPORTS AND UPDATES

SCT[®]RI IN A NUTSHELL: THE ORGANIZATION

SCT[®]RI is a volunteer organization. All roles (except Administrators) are filled with volunteer members who have time, energy and resources for the tasks. Working in an SCTRI action group is a learning environment for applying SCT in the service of task goals.

Management Group: Sets policy, oversees organizational direction, structure and function. This group meets twice yearly; selects, supports and guides the Director; and is made up of members at the advanced training level and beyond.

Director: Carries the organizational vision and values, oversees implementation, and represents the organization to the larger world.

Research Director: Develops the research function with goals of fully integrating research into SCTRI and crossing the boundary to the larger world.

Steering Group: Implements policies and links action groups. Selected by and acts with the authority of the Management Group between its semi-annual meetings; meets weekly.

System Mentors: Keep an eye on the overall functioning of SCTRI and system-centered training with the goal of maintaining the spirit and values of SCT. Mentors consult to members and action groups as needed, and hold the final authority for accepting recommendations for licensing individual members as SCT practitioners.

Action Groups: Small groups of members carrying out specific aspects of the work of SCTRI.

Currently:

Annual Conference
Continuing Education
Curriculum Development
Electronic Communications/Web
Membership
Newsletter
Research
Trainers

Administrators: Carry out organizational tasks under the supervision of the Director and the Steering Group.

STEERING GROUP

The function of the Steering Group is to oversee the daily operation of the organization in between Management Group meetings while holding the direction, vision and structure of SCTRI. During the last six months, our emphasis has been on matters that significantly affect the future of our organization.

With much excitement and pride, we handled the necessary legal and financial matters to become an independent non-profit organization. We have much appreciation for Jim Peightel and Katherine Straznickas, two

Management Group members, who joined an ad hoc group to facilitate our transition from Resources for Human Development (RHD) to independent status. Kathy Lum, our Administrator, has been invaluable in keeping track of the regulations, insurance needs, and financial structures that needed to be put into place before we could become independent of RHD.

The Steering Group continued to develop oversight responsibility for our Annual Conference, the major revenue source for the organization. For the first time, we have signed contracts for our Conference sites for the next three years – Boston in '07, and San Francisco in '08 and '09. Our Administrator Jan Vadell was instrumental in negotiating good rates for the hotels in these locations. With these contracts in place, we now have an opportunity to research potential Conference locations and to negotiate good rates several years in advance of future Conferences. The Steering Group has established a monthly meeting schedule with the Conference Directors to discuss programming and planning, and we have instituted a mentoring system for current Directors by the previous year's Directors. With this system, the former Conference Directors support the work of the next year's group while also getting trained by their predecessors in how to establish a mentoring system.

Through our preparation for becoming an independent entity, we have become more proactive with various aspects of the organization. For the first time, we have created a formal budget for the fiscal year. We have been active in monitoring the communication from inside of SCTRI to the outside world by working closely with the Web Group and reviewing the content of the materials that are now posted on the newly revised website. We have also established a formal "observer role" for Management Group members who want to explore an interest in joining the Steering Group. Our hope is that this role will make the boundary into the Steering Group more permeable and help to free up any current members who want to pursue other interests in the organization.

This past year has been a transformative year for the Steering Group as well as for the organization. We are aware that the Steering Group's ability to shift its focus to the future is a result of the organization's decision to fund two administrative positions and the commitment of many members to contribute their resources to the various Action Groups. We deeply thank all members who have supported us in our work.

*-Susan Gantt, Dorothy Gibbons, Joy Luther
& Jon McCormick*

SYSTEM MENTORS

The System Mentors keep an eye on the overall function of SCTRI and systems-centered training with the goal of maintaining the spirit and values of SCT. One specific function of the role is to provide the "yes-no" for licensing as an SCT practitioner; another is to consult to any level of SCTRI as

needed to identify and reduce the restraining forces to reaching their goals.

Currently we are happy to report that several licensing groups are moving closer to completing their peer-assessments and recommendations for licensing as SCT Practitioners. Members of these groups send their assessments and recommendations to the System Mentors for review. Seeing this flow coming down the "river," we have been discussing the idea that already-licensed SCT Practitioners could take on a role in this next review process, working in conjunction with the System Mentors to review the recommendations from the licensing groups. This new structure would develop the group of licensed SCT Practitioners in its assessment skills, as well as bring much needed resources to the review of licensing, a task that up to now the System Mentors have contained. We will let you know how this idea works out in reality!

-Yvonne Agazarian, Claudia Byram, Fran Carter & Susan Gantt

SUMMIT MEETING REPORT, MAY 2006

SCTRI's teleconference bridge offered members from various training groups a bridge into the larger system of SCTRI during our third Summit Meeting on May 16, 2006. As in the first two meetings, there were lively exchanges of information about the leading edge work in the many regional training groups. There was also a sense of group development in this third meeting, with a shift in members' sense of responsibility in relationship to their membership in the larger context of SCT that was very exciting!

Several members discussed how their training groups worked on the issue of sending a representative to the Summit Meeting. They noted how the discussions in their training groups increased their awareness that their individual group exists in the larger context of SCTRI. This led to a shift in the meaning of "member role" as related both to their training group and the larger system of training groups. One person mentioned that "personally" she thought it would be a waste of her time to devote 90 minutes to a teleconference, but as she became aware that her training group was a member of a subgroup of training groups, she found some curiosity and agreed to represent her group at the Summit Meeting. During the meeting, she reported her surprise and satisfaction about how much energy and excitement she had as she resonated with members from so many other regions. Other members also found some curiosity and a want to take this awareness of being a part of a larger system back into their individual groups.

Excitement grew as those attending the Summit Meeting began to explore the possibilities of making more extensive connections through increased participation in the larger system. They "re-discovered" that they could nourish these connections by joining Action Groups, by keeping in touch with members in other regions, by attending the Conference, and by keeping the "pipeline" open between their training group in the bi-yearly Summit Meeting. One member discovered that by taking up his authority to be a representative of his group, he was also bringing more of his resources into his group and the larger system. Several other members

commented on how the meeting helped them to be aware of how many resources are available to all members in the larger system.

This exploration led to an exploration of the permeability of boundaries within the training groups. Members from several training groups mentioned that their groups are struggling with the boundary between personal development and formal training, as well as opening boundaries to new members. Others have been struggling with the issues of membership qualifications at the intermediate level. Several people mentioned that having clear, explicit criteria helped their groups to make some decisions that were personally difficult to them, but that made sense in their member roles.

Members also brought in information about how they are opening system boundaries to the larger world. Some groups are using their theory sections to review current research about the brain and other fields of science and exploring how these scientific findings can inform SCT as well as how SCT can inform other fields. Members discussed the use of the website and SAVI as bridges to the outside world.

The group ran out of time before it ran out of ideas, and we ended with some of the following questions: How does SCT help us understand the rest of the world? How do other groups and societies understand the rest of the world? How can this inform SCT? How can SCT broaden its appeal to other cultures? How can SCT stay attuned with other groups and the rest of the world so we can best meet our overall goals? How does our use of language act as a driving or restraining force both within SCT and between SCT and the larger world? Members ended the Summit Meeting with energy to take back into their regional training groups and to continue to explore the linkage between the larger world and SCT and between SCT and their individual training groups.

Members attending this Summit Meeting were: Ben Benjamin (Boston), Michelle Billies (NY), Neal Cohen (Atlanta), Ken Dugan (Philadelphia), Ken Frontman (Atlanta), Attila Grunczeisz (Sweden), Robert Hartford (Washington, DC), Susan Karpenko (San Francisco), Susan Lange (Houston), Dayne Naretta (Louisiana), Sydnor Sikes (Austin). Also attending were members of the Steering Group: Susan Gantt, Dorothy Gibbons, Joy Luther, Jon McCormick, and Kathy Lum.

Future Summit Meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, December 12, 2006 and Tuesday, May 15, 2007 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. EST. Both meetings will be on the phone bridge (1-641-793-7018 Pin 181505#).

-Susan Gantt, Dorothy Gibbons, Joy Luther & Jon McCormick

CONFERENCE 2007

Ship to Shore communication---We are pleased and excited to report from the deck of our Conference 2007 ship that we have set sail in smooth seas toward our goal of having a professional, collegial, creative, exciting, and fun Conference 2007. Fran Carter, Ken Frontman, Mary Alice Hubbart, Susan Karpenko, Roelof Langman, Bonnie MacBride, Verena Murphy, Jim Peightel, Elaine Pratt, Michael Robbins and Steve Weinstein are helping us stay on course as we plan to dock this ship again at the Holiday Inn in Brookline, MA, March 24th through the 30th. Our professional and

seasoned crew of Kathy Lum and Jan Vadell are keeping things even smoother. We thank all of our crew for their assistance. We couldn't have so much fun and accomplish this task without their spirit and hard work.

Our program/vision crew of Michael Robbins and Fran Carter have developed a stellar program that will include something for all levels of training: foundation, intermediate and advanced. The program is tailored for offerings that are relevant for clinicians, OD consultants and educators. We expect to have a detailed description of the Conference workshops available on the web so that attendees can make well informed decisions about which program is right for them.

Elaine Pratt is again our Hospitality Cruise Director. She is currently planning our traditional Monday night dinner in Boston as well as a fun Thursday evening party and hotel reception on the ship with high quality light refreshments. Conference passengers can have some SCT inspired fun at the Holiday Inn on Thursday and then still have time to take a dingy to Boston for dinner.

We look forward to greeting each and every one of you in Boston in March!

-Jan Quirl and John Straznickas

CONTINUING EDUCATION _____

Supporting grassroots efforts is a major part of what the CE Group does. This is originally what led to psychologists and social workers being able to get CE credits for the SCT Annual Conference. For several years there has been interest among members of our medical community in obtaining Continuing Medical Education credits (CMEs). In the past several years we have identified a number of sources that can certify SCTRI to give such credits. Unfortunately, when we've gotten to the bottom line the cost has been around \$10,000, which is well beyond anything our grassroots members have been willing/able to support. Now, with ongoing work by Norma Safransky, representing the medical members, and Fran Rapoport, from the CE group, we are on the verge of being able to provide CME's. This new effort is through co-sponsorship with the Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy. This is not yet a done deal, but is very promising and much less expensive than typical (only \$300), so keep your fingers crossed!

The second major thrust of the CE Group at the moment, is planning the survival, development, and transformation of the CE Group itself. Jan Quirl is preparing to move on from the role of Conference CE Coordinator, as she is taking up the role of Co-Director for the Annual Conference. She is now looking for someone who is interested in taking over her position. We have sent out an e-mail to the listserv regarding this and hope to get a positive response. If you are interested, please contact Jan at jquir1@austin.rr.com. If you would like to join the CE Group in another capacity please contact Dick Ganley at dickganley@aol.com. Work on the CE Group and on special projects like the Conference can be either a volunteer or work exchange position.

We look forward to continuing to support SCTRI's ability to provide CE's to our members.

-Dick Ganley

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT _____

Our main achievement this past year was contributing a description of the SCT training resources and process to the website. We are still pleased with that! If you haven't already looked at it, please do – and send compliments and complaints to us. Especially complaints - we want the information to be useful to you, and any improvements we can make are welcome.

We are continuing to develop curriculum resources, for example, adding a follow-up to the Intermediate Skills training that orients members to the training resources and goals of the Intermediate level. We have also taken a step toward describing criteria for taking up training roles at the Annual Conference. These last two projects were undertaken in cooperation with the Trainers Group. Next steps will emerge – we'll keep you posted.

-Claudia Byram, Fran Carter, Eileen Jones, Susan Gantt & Dorothy Gibbons

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS/WEB _____

As you may know, our work over the past year has focused on upgrading the SCTRI website. Our exciting news is that we launched a re-vamped Member section of the SCTRI website on July 31! We are very pleased with it – and hope you will go, see what you think and tell us! Please let us know what works for you, and what doesn't. (One of our major learnings as a group is that what seems like a good idea from the planning perspective does not always work out that way for the users.)

This launch meets our first goal on the Web project: to get a more stable and flexible infrastructure 'under' the website (built by Roelof Langman, our hero), and a content organization that builds on our original site in a useful way.

But we have another goal! Over the next two years we want to develop a much more interactive site, allowing members and action groups to post material to the site themselves, to exchange files, and to build on one another's work. We also are beginning a process of developing more information on applications of systems-centered methods – like in organizations and in clinical settings. Our "customers" on this project are both ourselves, that is, people involved in learning and working with a systems-centered approach, and curious people interested in learning what SCT is and how it might be useful to them.

If you are interested in contributing to this project, your time, energy and expertise are welcome! Contact any one of us.

-Claudia Byram, Rowena Davis, Lucy Fine, Roelof Langman, Kathy Lum, Michael Silverstein, Debbie Woolf, & Alida Zweidler-McKay

RESEARCH _____

There have been a number of exciting developments in our research efforts recently. First, the Steering Group allocated \$7000 for research funding for the coming year. The bulk of that money is being used to support the SCT and Generalized

Anxiety Disorder (GAD) project led by Larry Ladden. The additional funding is being used to begin statistical analysis of some existing data that SCT Conference and workshop attendees have graciously provided. Thank you SCTRI members and Steering Group for this essential support.

Larry Ladden says preparation for the GAD study is going well. The design is nearly complete after consultation with an expert on anxiety disorders research. A research diagnosis protocol and raters are in place, the Philadelphia-area therapists for the study are raring to go, and the application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Subjects Research is under revision for resubmission. Study launch is expected soon after IRB approval. Good luck Larry, et al! Larry also reports that the paper on the initial, pilot study findings from the SCT/GAD project is under revision for resubmission to a journal.

The two SCT papers I (Rich O'Neill) have completed with colleagues are currently under review and have been for several months. We are waiting curiously, with fingers crossed, at the edge of the unknown for yea, nay, or possibly, yea with revisions.

Verena Murphy, a long-time Research Action Group member, is crossing the t's and dotting the i's to complete her doctoral dissertation. In part of it she used a modification of Anita Simon and Yvonne Agazarian's System for Analyzing Verbal Interaction (SAVI). She rated transcripts of 5 randomly selected sessions of the SCTRI Steering Group's work and five random sessions of a City Council, and one session of an unstructured Decision Making Team with the following result:

Steering group: 3% Red Light behaviors; 65% Yellow Light; 32% Green Light
City Council: 2.7% Red Light; 84% Yellow Light; 13% Green Light
Decision Team: 15% Red Light; 68% Yellow Light; 17% Green Light

Verena, Larry, I and others will be discussing our SCT research at the 2007 SCTRI Annual Conference. Hope to see you there and thanks again for your support!

-Rich O'Neill, SCTRI Research Director

TRAINERS

In the past few meetings the Trainers Group has been focusing in three areas: the criteria for passage into intermediate training; the criteria for movement into the Authority Issue Group; and thirdly, beginning a discussion of a new training context for advanced members.

During our meetings we have been discussing the role of trainers in communicating to trainees what is required as they move into the SCT intermediate training track. Because trainees are entering a licensing track, there is a requirement that they have a professional license and be working in their field. Another essential area for trainees at the intermediate level is to take up consultation with a consultant. The focus of consultation is on applying the SCT methods in one's work context with an understanding of the theoretical underpinnings that guide one's clinical, organizational, and educational work. The goals and objectives for the training program are listed on

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the web (www.systemscentered.com) under the training curriculum.

We have also been talking about a key area of training that occurs at all levels, but is fundamental to a candidate's eligibility for the Authority Issue Group: namely, the ability to move from person system into member system. SCT has done much work in this specific area of training, learning the importance of being able to work from member system, as well as the challenge in training others to make this shift in perspective. We normalized the challenge for the trainee (in all of us!) in this move from person to member by noting that it is a developmental step, not simply a learning issue.

And lastly, we discussed a new offering for advanced training to begin at the 2007 Conference. We will be offering an observation training track concurrent with the new Authority Issue Group. This training is for trainers as well as for those interested in becoming an SCT trainer. The focus will be on tracking the group dynamics and the phase of system development, the communication patterns that support them, and the leader's interventions to the leading edges of the member, subgroup and group-as-a-whole, and linking the leader's intervention to theory and group functioning. This group will observe all experiential meetings of the Authority Issue Group and meet during the group's force field time to process observations, led by Rich Armington. The training will meet twice a year, including once at the Conference (including the weekend). Prerequisites for this training are completion of the Authority Issue Group, membership in a licensing group or licensed, and a commitment to membership in this advanced training for the duration of the authority group, which is approximately three years.

-Rich Armington

ATLANTA

First and foremost, congratulations go to our trainer, Susan Gantt, who has just been made a Fellow in APA! That is quite an achievement.

Our training group is developing into a more complex system as members move ahead toward licensing, and other members begin their journey down the path. What we have discovered is that by having all levels of training in our training group, we can see more clearly what to expect and what is possible to attain. One of the things that we are doing this year is having various members of the training group take on the role of consultant or of therapist with our trainer right by our side. The novice volunteer will attempt to enact the role with the trainer right there, stopping the action to ask what the volunteer is thinking, and where he/she is planning to go. It is exciting work. Then one of the more experienced members will take on the role, and we get to see him/her work with hardly an interruption by the trainer. The exciting part is that we all knew this person "when", that is, before he/she became so competent, and so each of us finds inside that kernel of "I can learn this, too."

Neal Cohen was our representative to the last Phone Bridge Summit which was held in the spring. Neal has generously written up his experience which can be found elsewhere in this Newsletter. He came back to the group full

of enthusiasm for the group and for all the ideas that they generated this year.

As a group we have become interested in the idea that the brain can be changed by subgrouping, and many of us have bought Dan Siegel's books (1999, 2004) to try and understand how all of that works. The whole concept of physiological changes occurring by changing behavior is revolutionary. After these past years of discussions about the efficacy of psychotherapy and psychotherapists, this is heady stuff, and oh so very welcome. We are wondering if other training groups are considering the same material.

Additionally, it is always exciting when SCT is introduced to a new professional group and is well received. Mary Crist Brown writes that "there is interest in SCT brewing amongst the Clinical Pastoral Education Supervisor's in Training in Atlanta." She and Cynthia Vaughan spent several hours introducing "The SIT's" to a taste of SCT with encouraging results. Out of the eleven students present, there were at least half who were interested in knowing more about SCT and/or in receiving training in SCT. We are looking forward to seeing these newly interested folks joining our training groups and adding the richness they bring from their perspective.

-Bettie S. Banks

AUSTIN

The SCTRI-Austin Board continues to look at its role in the SCT community in Austin and met on September 9, 2006 for a retreat towards that goal. After reviewing the SCTRI-A mission, the Board was able to acknowledge the isomorphic development of the system. SCTRI has training opportunities on all levels both nationally and internationally. In Austin, there are three on-going clinical training groups meeting weekly, five trainers (Rich Armington, Susan Cassano, Sydnor Sikes, Linda Scott, and Joy Luther), a new short-term skills training group (see details below), and a recently announced monthly training group to begin in Spring '07 (also see below). Exploring the energy found in possibly bringing SCT into a new context, the Board discovered several emerging directions. These are: the creation of simple **research** structures; increased **permeability** and exchange of information between the Board, SCTRI, and the SCT Austin community to keep Austin's identity creative and innovative; the development of short-term training for **organizational and educational** contexts; and the development of **financial** resources to support these emerging ideas. The Board is now looking at adding new board members with these visions in mind. The Board continues to be very satisfied with the structure and the free form emergence of ideas from this work group.

Training News - There are two new training opportunities in Austin!

Building on the work of Ray Haddock in the UK, Joy Luther has started an 8 week, short-term psycho-educational group that teaches people the skills that trainees learn in *intermediate skills training*. Billed as "*Discovering the Authentic Self: The SCT® Approach to Change*," the group was open to anyone interested in learning how to work with their own defenses. At press time, the group had eight members, had completed two sessions and had just "crossed the boundary". Joy reported how excited she was to see the group members

make discoveries inside themselves and how it resonated with her own discovery of what she had integrated since first learning the skills. She intends to offer this group several times a year and sees it having three functions: 1) as a way to introduce people to SCT training; 2) as a way to get clients ready for a long term SCT group, and 3) as a way to provide leadership training and/or container training for intermediate trainees.

In addition, the Austin trainers have decided to begin a monthly training day in the Spring of 2007. It will include a foundation group, a theory group, and leadership training. Susan Cassano and Linda Scott will take the lead, with other trainers joining for specific topics. The foundation group section will provide opportunities for observer and container training. This training day may be of particular interest for out-of-towners who are unable to attend a weekly group.

-Bertha Genna Kondrak

BOSTON

Here in Boston we can still hear the echoes of all of your voices from the recent Conference. Trader Joe's in Brookline just isn't the same without you. Coolidge Corner looks empty without your smiling faces. The waiters at the local restaurants keep asking "When is that Conference coming back to town? You know, that one where they all sat in a circle and noticed the spoons, I mean forks, in the road? They were a really nice crew!" So we are all getting ready for you, (yes, I mean you, not the person behind you) to come back and join us at the end of March. It will be a great pleasure to welcome you back!

-Michael Robbins

LONDON

In June 2006 Yvonne Agazarian, Susan Gantt and Una McCluskey ran a series of SCT workshops in London, an annual event started by Yvonne in 2000. This year for the first time, the London Business Group organized the workshops. The Business Group developed from the London Study Group has been in existence since late 2002. As the members have continued to train in SCT, we have been able to apply the methods in the Study Group and develop a system that has become more complex. We realized that we needed a new context for some of our goals and set up a Business Group at the end of 2005.

The first task for the Business Group was to organize the London workshops in 2006. This was made easier by having a number of existing structures to build on. For this we are grateful to Mary Horton and John Parkes. We started by identifying tasks and roles for the Business Group members. It took us a little longer to realize that we hadn't really paid attention to building a system to contain these roles and tasks first.

We discovered that regular phone contact between Madeline O'Carroll and Rowena Davis, who took on the main organizing roles, was very helpful. We ran our phone meetings paying attention to task and process and doing "surprises and learnings" at the end. We also had one member in the role of liaising with the participants and trainers and another in setting

up the spreadsheets to monitor registration, payments and so on. This clear definition of roles was hard to stick to in the beginning but it got easier and certainly was very useful.

We're now moving to taking more responsibility for marketing and organizing the June 2007 workshops with the goal of taking on more in 2008, possibly even financial responsibility. This has been an exciting development and we look forward to learning more.

-Madeline O'Carroll and Rowena Davis

PHILADELPHIA

As the Philadelphia center completes its second year, its major activities consist of gearing up for the continuation of the Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) study and hosting our popular Roundtable events. Larry Ladden and Faith Gordon are organizing the next stage for the GAD study, a continuation of the study conducted in Austin in May, 2001. Within the next few months, licensed SCT members in the Philadelphia area will film the 10-session treatments conducted according to the SCT treatment protocol.

The SCT Roundtables have become a familiar part of the Philadelphia SCT community. Three times a year, we gather for wine and a light supper, followed by a discussion on an SCT topic of current interest. In June, Susan Gantt and Larry Ladden gave a short presentation on our current findings in using SCT methods to undo anxiety and on our future plans to continue the GAD study in Philadelphia. This presentation was followed by a lively discussion on the theory of roles and using SCT to undo anxiety.

In October, we hosted a "Pot Luck" at Yvonne Agazarian's home, with people bringing both food and a "pot luck" of their experiences in using SCT in their professional lives. These roundtable events have emerged as an opportunity for members to introduce spouses, friends, and co-workers to "bite size" pieces of SCT theory and practice in an informal way. In addition, it has provided the Philadelphia SCT members an opportunity to socialize outside the structure of our training groups. Our practice of subgrouping during the discussions allows newcomers to have the experience of being joined with whatever ideas they bring in. The lively discussions are infused with play as many of the more experienced members get excited, forget to subgroup and are gently reminded to "row" and invite others to join by saying "anyone else." Local members have generously offered their homes, and an organizing group manages the food, invitations, topics, and presenters. We count on the donations of those attending to cover the costs of food, wine and postage. We invite all members of the SCT community, not just those in Philadelphia to attend. If you are not in the Philadelphia area, but know someone in Philadelphia who may be interested, please have them contact Dorothy Gibbons at dorothygibbons2@yahoo.com for information. We have received feedback from many newcomers that they have felt welcomed, comfortable, and stimulated by these gatherings, with no sense of pressure to join SCT. We generally host these events in February, June, and October, so please consider coming. The more, the merrier!

Our organizing group consists of Faith Gordon, Carl Yusavitz, Claudia Byram, Jim Peightel, and Dorothy Gibbons. This group functions as an SCT task group, and we welcome anyone who would like to practice using SCT methods towards a work goal to join us. Contact anyone of us if you are interested in joining or observing this group.

-Dorothy Gibbons

SAN FRANCISCO

Conference 2008! - Hey everybody, start dreaming of cable cars taking you up to the stars! Conference 2008 is coming to San Francisco, and yes cable cars will stop right outside our hotel! So, start planning how you will bring yourself, and your heart to San Francisco in two years.

Thursday and Friday Trainings: We welcome those interested in SCT to join our Thursday afternoon training groups, which meet from 3:00-6:00 P.M. several times per year, the day before the Friday training, (see Notice Board for dates). We offer special rates for students and to those who are able to commit to the entire year of trainings.

As the members from Thursday's training develop their skills, they are welcomed into the morning of the Friday training group, (9:00 A.M.-12:00 Noon), and will eventually participate in the full day of training, (9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.) followed by our business meeting.

The Friday group has been meeting for several years and continues to grow in interesting ways. Recently, with a little help from our fearless leader, Susan Gantt, we developed a new addition to the theory of SCT. Usually we begin our training days with an hour of exploring theory. During our meeting in August, we created a way to look at ourselves and the "conditions" of the group.

We developed three categories:

- A) Condition of the group (anxious, flight, noisy, yes, buts, etc.)
- B) Leader intervention: Members and Leader
- C) Outcome of the intervention on the group

These three categories, our ABCs, were exciting and effective, and really opened up our group to observing ourselves more specifically. The categories helped us to fine-tune during the group, similar to how the driving & restraining forces clearly define the development of the group at the end. We had a hypothesis that it helped us successfully navigate some role-locks that had consistently snagged our work for the past couple of years. We even had a fire-drill during the late afternoon, which did not derail us at all. That's progress!

-Roxanne Fuller

STOCKHOLM

The Stockholm training group continues to work for a full day every second month with members coming from all over Sweden and one member from the UK to participate. Ray Haddock, from UK, continues to be the trainer for our group with some of the more experienced members of our community taking up different training roles. For the moment we are around 20 people participating in the training with different levels of experience and training. Each day contains theory, experiential and skills training. Because some members are newer to SCT and some members have more training we have the opportunity to take up different training roles during the day. We are organizing a Systems-Centered Training Workshop, January 29-31, with Susan Gantt and Ray Haddock. For more details, check the Notice Board in this Newsletter or www.systemscentered.com.

-Sven-Erik Viskari

YORK

The University of York has a lively SCT scene which bursts into life every September in the form of an Annual Systems-Centered Training Week held in Kings Manor - a beautiful, old (but comfortable!) medieval university building in the middle of York. This year is no exception. We are in the process of running, (even as we write this report!) our 15th Annual SCT Training Week. Una McCluskey started the week off with an Attachment Workshop followed by a five-day SCT training week with three training tracks - Foundation training, Intermediate Skills training and Intermediate Experiential and Leadership training. Susan Gantt and Fran Carter have come over from the US with Susan taking the role of Director of the Conference and leading the Foundation training, Fran leading the Intermediate Experiential and Leadership training and Ray Haddock (home-grown!) leading the Intermediate Skills training. Una is also Director of Group Therapy Training at the University of York and is our link into the university. We are sadly missing Yvonne who was not able to be here because she is recovering (very nicely, we understand) from her recent operation. We wish her lots of love and every best wish for a very speedy recovery. We continue to be enthusiastic about our commitment to SCT and SCT Training in York and value our links with both the European and American SCT community. We'd love more people to come to York next year!

-Liza Bingley Miller and Una McCluskey

Continuing Education Credits (CE's) for SCT Training

SCTRI currently offers CE's for psychologists for the Annual Conference, and for non-conference Core Training (currently the Authority Issue, Skills and Mentor Training Groups). We also seek CE's on a local basis for social workers, mental health counselors, and marriage and family therapists in the area in which the Annual Conference is held. Trainers may also provide APA CE's for training events they do.

Certificates of attendance can also be obtained for Core Trainings and through individual trainers, with the member submitting these to their professional organization for possible acceptance as CE's.

SCTRI is interested in providing CE's for other professions if members are willing to provide the time, energy, and resources (emergent energy) to obtain provider status for offering such credits. If you are interested in further information about obtaining CE's, please contact Dick Ganley, CE Group Coordinator, at dickganley@aol.com or at 610-664-5730. Some trainers and local groups provide additional CE's. Check with individual trainers.

Join Us at the Summit! Mark your calendars!

The next Summit Meeting

is scheduled for
Tuesday, December 12, 2006
10:00 - 11:30 AM, ET
on the phone bridge
(641) 793-7018 PIN 181505#

The Spring call is scheduled for

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

10:00 - 11:30 AM, ET

also on the bridge line

We hope you can join us!

MEMBERS FORUM

This is a community forum for posting announcements on related trainings, personal life events, awards, letters to the Editor, responses to articles that have appeared in our Newsletter, etc.

To Joan Hemenway whose brain cancer is a deep sorrow in her pastoral community and in ours:

Dear Joan, you are in our hearts as you go gently into that good night. From all of us who encountered your presence and integrity and love and especially from the New York Thursday groups.

To Zeb Schachtel who is on a long recovery from infections in the process of a hip replacement:

Dear Zeb, of the great laugh and deep understandings and beautiful presence, we are sending you our strength and love and fortitude in your unexpected and difficult challenge.

Susan Gantt has been made a Fellow in APA. Way to go Susan!!

A Neuroscience Question and Responses

(Mark Perlmutter sent this question out on the listserv. We thought that both the question and the answers were so interesting that we would publish it! - Michael Robbins, Newsletter Editor)

I've noticed that I can repeatedly process feelings (for example sadness) without being aware of the trigger, but until the trigger becomes conscious, the feelings continue to arise. It's like there's a fire smoldering somewhere in the brain that continually throws off energy. Even though the smoke can be blown away, until the source of the fire is identified and put out, the feelings keep arising. In short, true relief comes only after a cognitive process corrects or nullifies some generative subconscious force. Can someone explain the brain chemistry that reflects these changes? Specifically, 1) Is the generative unconscious force a subconscious thought pattern arising in the neo-cortex or does it come from somewhere else? 2) What brain activity keeps it under wraps and makes it hard to access, i.e. what changes in the brain enable us to access subconscious triggers? 3) Why is it that merely processing the emotions doesn't "put out the fire"? I'm assuming that processing the emotions occurs mostly in the limbic system whereas identifying the trigger occurs in the cortex. What part of the brain does the cortex act on when it identifies the trigger?

-Mark Perlmutter

The first answer came from Gaea Logan

Your best answers come from Dan Siegel, Lou Cozzolino or Allen Shore. Actually, there may not be an exact answer but more of an elaboration of what is known. Firstly, some of that sadness that seems hard to access is in fact hard to access because it emerges from DEEP in the cortical structures carried by well and frequently routed neural pathways. In a sense, you have traveled down those pathways so many times that it is a well bushwhacked trail complete with all the familiar affects. I don't really have an answer for the triggering

mechanism but suspect that it is connected to memory processes in the hippocampus. Neural pathways go up from the hippocampus and cross over into the limbic regions and down into the deeper cortical structures. The deeper cortical structures are imprinted with information very early. For example, if you were a very empathic child with a depressed mother (or a mother with unresolved trauma) you encoded her affect via limbic attunement. You breathed her mood so to speak, it became the external "amniotic fluid" to your early mind. So it is "very early" and less accessible to "conscious cognitive processing".

The left brain is designed for syllogistic reasoning, a "making sense" of experience. We are story tellers who's survival is all about making sense of our experience, yet it is more or less an adventure in subjectivity. As we engage parts of the cerebral cortex, we fire the neural pathways that cross the corpus collosum and integrate left and right brain activity. This moves us towards a bilateral hemispheric integration. This is how we integrate or resolve trauma, saving the right brain from collapsing into intense affect states that are a-temporal. You also ask why it takes a while for the affect to stop firing even though you think you have cognitively processed it. I don't know why, but it's true. Dan Siegel talks about giving 20 minutes after someone has "lost it" and taken the low road in an escalation before their neurochemistry returns to normal. I suspect it has something to do with what is released through the "fight or flight" mechanisms. (Or why a chicken still runs around after its head is cut off.) Neural pathways have a flow that is intrinsic, like a river with its own momentum.

That being said I am not completely sure of the precision, relevancy or accuracy of my answers to you.

The second answer came from Yvonne Agazarian

Among others, sources I use for neuroscience are Dan Siegel's *The Developing Mind* (1999) and *Parenting from the Inside Out* (2004). The second is an easier read and connects neuroscience and relationships in terms that are easy for a non neuroscientist to understand.

You reflect: "I've noticed that I can repeatedly process feelings (for example sadness) that arise without my even being aware of the trigger, but until the trigger becomes a conscious, the feelings continue to arise." They will, until you locate the trigger (which may be past or present, and may involve explicit or implicit memory) in its context: both past & present, personal and existential.

Your question has to do with experience when you're centered in contrast to when you are still in the cognitive part of a role. Once a deep feeling is aroused, your whole system is charged, and will be for a period of time. Anger, for example, takes 20 minutes to half-an-hour for the adrenaline surge to reabsorb. More importantly, feelings are not integrated until you get centered and experience them both as personal and also as existential, i.e., part of human experience.

You recognize your need to access the trigger (which may be present, or a past memory or a role import) and the next bit is to see the trigger in the context of your past, present as well as its implications for your future. (Somewhat redundant, sorry!)

Below are two excerpts from the training manual that I'm writing which may be a useful and less redundant!

Apprehension is related to our emotional brain, or right brain, which is present in the early phases of life, and receives the sensory-emotional flow of energy and information. The "low road" to behavior has its source in the emotional brain (the sensory thalamus) and has a direct route through the amygdala into action. When we take the low road we act on impulse.

We don't pause to think. Instant responses are useful if we are in an emergency, like suddenly meeting a tiger. It's not so useful if we mistake a paper tiger for a real one and react without taking time to tell the difference.

Comprehension is related to our thinking brain, our left brain, and depends upon the development of the sensory cortex. (Developing a connection to our sensory cortex allows us to think before we act. We do not develop this connection until we are about eighteen months of age!) The "high road" to action takes its path from the right brain, through the left brain.

We can then collect information before we act and make judgments. When we use the high road we can tell the difference between real tigers and paper tigers. Ideally we integrate the comprehensive knowledge of our left brain and the apprehensive knowledge of our right brain. (We do a lot of this work when we are asleep and dreaming.) Integrating our two kinds of knowing gives us emotional intelligence and common sense.

Feelings feel the same, whether they come from the sensory emotional experience of our interactions with the world around us, or from our thoughts about our experience: past or present. Our brain cannot tell the difference. For our brain, all feelings are here-and-now. It is therefore important to tell the difference between feelings that come from our thoughts and feelings that come from our emotional experience. The anxiety exercise helps us to use our intellect to locate the source of our anxiety and to tell the difference between the paper tigers that make us anxious, and the real tigers that we need to pay attention to.

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