

Personal Transformations in Small Groups

A Jungian Perspective



ROBERT D BOYD

ROUTLEDGE


Personal transformations in small groups

The theoretical propositions of analytical psychology are difficult to verify and usually rest on the empirical evidence of reported case studies. In *Personal Transformations in Small Groups* Robert D. Boyd and his colleagues break new ground by subjecting case material to a rigorous analysis in their report of a research program which has focused on the expansion of consciousness in the small group and the interrelated phenomenon of personal transformation.

A matrix model, conceptualizing the small group as a dynamic structural system, frames the empirical studies in the book. These include the exploration of symbolic archetypal themes and the observation of influential members who play crucial roles in group transitions. The book describes a new methodology for studying the social grieving brought about at times of transition, and the small group personal transformations that occur as individuals work through episodic themes of individuation. It also shows how personal transformations are affected by behaviors evoked by the anima and animus. Each chapter contains case materials and an extensive review of the relevant literature.

The methodologies described can serve as both a model for research and as a source of research tools and will therefore be of great interest to all professionals and researchers in group therapy and analytical psychology.

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Introduction

All research is conducted within some given context and arises from some historical base. Having a knowledge of these matters gives the basis for understanding why the research pursued a given direction and how the means it adopted were consistent with the realization of its goals. It is from this perspective that the introduction was undertaken. What follows is my attempt to provide a brief account, if you will, a history of the direction our research has been taking and an explanation, brief as it will be, of the means we have adopted in conducting our research.

Our initial studies were conceptually grounded in psychoanalytic thought. That would be expected in view of the fact that my psychological training at the University of Chicago was a study of Freud and the neo-Freudians. I brought to my students what my teachers had brought to me. In the early days of the Laboratory we investigated Bion's (1959) theory of Basic Assumption Cultures, mechanisms of defense (A. Freud, 1937; Murphy, 1960), the conflict-free sphere of the ego (Hartmann, 1958), and Erikson's (1950) epigenetic theory. The application of these theories extended our knowledge of the dynamics within the small group. Our contributions were made mainly in the areas of furthering the methodologies and the development of research instrumentations in the study of small groups based upon these theories. The studies and my experiences in working with small groups in a variety of settings were the bases upon which I developed the Three Channel model (Boyd, 1966) of the small group. The Three Channel model interrelates three forms of content that is communicated in the interactions within a small group.

This model proved to be a useful conceptualization in both conducting and investigating the dynamics of small groups (Boyd and Wilson, 1974). The motivation channel, defined by Erikson's epigenetic theory, identified the basic concerns being expressed in the group. The various ways the group used to approach and avoid relationships were defined by Bion's Basic Assumption Cultures. The members' behaviors

Introduction

were specified in terms of valencies (Stock and Thelen, 1958). The third form of content was the work that the group was engaged in and here different conceptual systems were employed. This model was the conceptual framework for several dissertations. As is always the case, when one has scaled a mountain there is the unexplored land that lies beyond. There was something taking place in the group which could not be accounted for by the psychoanalytic theories we had been using in our studies of the small group. At first I could not clearly identify it and I certainly could not name it. In my searching to find what I was intuiting I reread Slater (1966) and came upon a brief reference to Neumann's (1954) work in Slater's book. I began reading Neumann's writings which then lead me further into a study of Jung's works. My initial sense in reading Neumann was that I had found what I had been observing but had not been able to clearly identify. There were archetypal elements at play in the dynamics of the small group and if we were to get a better and deeper understanding of what was taking place in the group and with the members, we had to take account of these archetypal dynamics. This launched a whole new area of study. From these studies I proposed the Matrix Model (1975), which was later published (Boyd, 1983, 1984) in a more expanded version.

Conceptualizing is one part of a two part task, the other being testing the explanations which are set out based upon the conceptual framework. It is this task to which I plan to spend the remaining pages of the Introduction. Thus the Matrix Model, which is described in detail in Chapter One, will be set aside at this time as our focus is now on a discussion dealing with the issues involved in the testing of empirical explanations. The discussion is framed within two traditions: empirical literature in analytical psychology; the dialogs of naive falsification and experiential logic of the soul.

The literature in analytical psychology is rich in case material. The carefully documented accounts of individuals' encounters and struggles with psychic elements of the unconscious have added to a more thorough understanding of the psyche and have made significant contributions to the concretization of theory. Our work has been along similar lines; however, there are differences which set it apart from the mainstream literature in analytical psychology. The similarities can be readily identified. Case material is also the data base of our studies. In the parlance of academic psychology, our work is described as qualitative research studies. Experimental design studies have not been used as they introduce extraneous variables and set up a different context than that which is the focus of our investigations. Individuals come into groups with specific purposes and goals and to alter these in any way for the objective of a scientific investigation alters the nature of the setting. The case material reported in the chapters which follow has

been drawn from self-analytic groups which were specifically set up for that purpose. They were videotaped and to that extent we accept the observation that we may have altered the setting; however, the videotapes were made as an instructive device for the members and which they used to review and analyze the dynamics of their group.

Our case material deals with the transactions within small groups and not between a therapist and a client. On an initial consideration, these two contexts may be viewed as being fundamentally different. The small group does present a much more complex system of transactions than is the situation of the therapist/client dyad. The complexity is certainly there but the presence of psychic content in various forms is also there. The leader is the other concern; however, the interventions which are made by the leader are structured within the framework of analytical psychology, as they are for the therapist. There are differences between the two settings but the differences rather than discounting the possible presence of archetypal content and transformation processes, point to their presence in various dynamics within the transactions among the members, the manifestations of the social and cultural systems as well as between the members and the leader.

There is a fundamental difference between most of the studies reported in the literature on analytical psychology and the approach we have taken in our work. It was pointed out above that the empirical evidence for the propositions of analytical psychology is the reporting of case material. Our studies are also based on case material but the critical demarcation is that our studies are structured as investigations to examine the propositions of analytical psychology by subjecting them to tests of naive falsification. The reports on case material, which appears in the literature on analytical psychology, are set forth as evidence of some concept or proposition of the theory. These accounts are offered as verifications for either the existing theoretical propositions or as amplifications and refinements of the theory. There can be no discounting the value of such contributions; however, they cannot be viewed as severe tests of the theory.

My position that a more severe test must be applied to the propositions certainly reflects the influence of an academic culture. But this should not be a basis for a disjunction in our dialog, rather a further reason for a dialog.

Thus our research program involved more than just examining what was taking place in a small group in order to describe the dynamics in a coherent manner; our project has been to test the explanations of what our observations appeared to indicate was occurring in the group. Our observations were descriptions but it is also the case that most descriptions are in one form or another explanations. Descriptions come about as an interplay between the conceptual perceptions we bring to the

Introduction

situation and the autonomous dynamics that are structuring the transactions. That relationship was spoken to by Popper (1959) when he observed that it is inconceivable to assume we can view an event without bringing to it some prior preconceptions. To be able to move back and forth between one's conceptual framework and the autonomous features of events which are being observed generally takes a good deal of time. This statement simply recognizes the fact that it takes a period of study to become aware of and knowledgeable about a particular area of exploration. There was a period of three years before I undertook any investigation or encouraged any of my students to propose a dissertation in this field of study. Following that period, the task that then confronted us was: How do you go about doing such tests?

There is implicit, if indeed not a fairly explicit, criticism that reports of case material are not legitimate evidence for the testing of propositions. There is no question that case material, if accurately reported, is one form of evidence, but that is not the issue here. What is before us is the problem of determining what evidence can be accepted as the basis for the justification of an explanation. Are explanations justified on the basis of accumulated case material? Such an approach is built upon induction and explanation founded upon induction has been repudiated as a method of scientific explanation from the time of Hume (1748). More recently Popper (1959) has taken the argument against induction further and has advanced the method of falsification. In brief, this method argues that proof can not be achieved by the accumulation of supportive evidence because it is impossible to establish the point at which an exhaustive body of evidence for any given explanation has been reached. Thus evidence that supplies proof may or may not be advancing the truth value of an explanation. There is no criterion by which to judge its truth value other than the questionable process of accumulating such supportive evidence. But this approach can be thrown into serious jeopardy by only one piece of evidence that disconfirms the explanation regardless of the quantity of evidence supporting the explanation. Why not then begin by looking for disconfirming evidence? In Popper's term scientific discovery requires the investigator to set up in advance an explanation such that, if the results contradict the explanation, it then has to be given up.

This is a stark assertion and it needs some amplification in view of recent dialogs on Popper's original dogmatic falsification (Feyerabend, 1975; Lakatos, 1970). There is some agreement now that an explanation which has been falsified should not be discarded out of hand. It is certainly highly suspect. Further research may be in order but such a decision must be made on a case by case basis. At such times, there are not only the considerations related to the method employed in the investigation but also the historical, cultural, and political forces and

influences at work. For example, the initial rejection of Freud's ideas, and the labeling of Jung's works as mystic writings, were fundamentally evidence of the cultural forces at work rather than the expression of disputes over scientific content. Where such forces are at work, the decision may be too readily accepted to reject and abandon a particular line of research (Feyerabend, 1975; Kuhn, 1962). The tendency to reject unpopular explanations must be always considered and taken into account; however, Lakatos (1970) argues that the method of falsification is a surer way to the truth value of an explanation than can possibly be asserted for the method of induction, but dogmatic falsification must be given up for the more tentative rejection of a theory set forth in the methods of naive and sophisticated falsification.

It is not my intention to pursue the many issues which are raised about Popper's theory of the logic of scientific discovery, but I cannot leave the discussion at this point without one further observation. I am indebted to an Australian colleague who brought to my attention that in the final analysis Popper's position is also an inductive method. In the long perspective of a research program this is true, but not to see a fundamental and critical demarcation between the methods of falsification and induction is a failure to understand the principal issue of valuation. Falsification invites criticism and induction seeks certainty (Dewey, 1929).

We have framed the conjectures set out in our research program as assertions to be falsified. The design of the research studies has been structured in ways that have attempted to find disconfirming evidence. This approach may not always be clearly evident in the chapters as the focus of these writings was primarily on conceptual content rather than on the reporting of research procedures.

The conjecture is the point at which a research program formally begins. There is always a psychological dimension to the explanation of why one particular conjecture is set forth rather than another among an array of conceivable conjectures. This dynamic is important in the mix of things because it puts on notice the cluster of biases that add both prejudice and, what is too often discounted because of an over concern for controlling prejudice, the virtues of intuition. The conjecture itself is the directive focus, however, in the formal structure of a research program.

With the conjecture stated, the question arises: How do we go about testing the conjecture? It is not my intention to describe the specific steps which are taken in conducting our research program but I do want to speak to what may be called the logic of our method.

A conjecture is an assertion that certain relationships exist among a specific set of concepts. For example, the conjecture is proposed that the negative anima is confronted or given no place in the life of the group

Introduction

when the social system of the group is in the developmental phase of the Good Mother. I would like to point out in passing that the conjecture contains the condition for disconfirming evidence, namely that if there is no evidence that the negative anima is confronted or ignored then the conjecture is falsified (not dismissed out of hand, however, on the basis of this one test). It is an immediate realization in viewing any conjecture that we are unable to come to any firm understanding of its meaning until there is a sufficient specification of its language. What is meant by the words 'anima', 'Good Mother', 'confronted', etc? The task is to specify these terms in such a manner that they can be experienced in such a way that they can be differentiated from other experiences.

I want to stress the significance of 'specify' and 'experience'. I have avoided the word 'define' because it connotes a definitive quality which assumes the task to be that of determining a phenomenon by language rather than comprehending it through experience. Scientific exploration is not advanced by pushing at more and more precise definitions but by exploring and testing relations. It is sufficient to establish a firm set of specifiers through experience in demarcating a concept in order that it be a functional element in the statement of a proposed conjecture. Thus we develop experiential specifications as the way to come to a firm understanding of what is intended by a given concept. The specifications are not exhaustive but they are sufficient to demarcate the concept from other concepts and to allow us to place it into a conjecture within which it has its specific or particular meaning.

Even more critical than the notion of specification of concepts is the role that experience plays in our research program. As indicated above, there is an inseparable relationship between specified concepts and experience. Concepts do not exist apart from experience. You cannot perceive a concept that you cannot experience. To those who do not know the concept of anima yet experience its manifestations in their behavior, they may attribute its presence to projection or in even a more naive state of self-knowledge to some unexplainable emotion. The concept has to be made known to the individual by means of the specifiers but words alone will not make the concept meaningful unless it is experienced subjectively. This is a learning task whereby the information in the form of the concept's specifiers come to be understood in terms of the individual's experiences. The one is placed meaningfully in the context of the other.

As stated earlier this is not the occasion for a detailed discussion of the specific ways our research program was conducted; however, a few words concerning our procedures need to be made explicit in light of what has been spoken to. Our research program uses coders to identify the evidence needed to test the conjecture. Coders are persons who have been trained to identify the concepts under study. That is to say, they

Introduction

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have come to know the concepts that are being studied experientially. They are knowledgeable persons in terms of the theory and concepts but generally they are not informed about the nature or problem of the study and this is particularly the case where such knowledge might conceivably influence their observations. Certainly as intelligent individuals they have hunches as to the problem being examined but special procedures are taken to check for possible biases in their observations.

The groups are videotaped and these videotapes are the raw data for our studies. The coders observe these as they would a play. They must bring themselves to the ongoing dynamics as they unfold in a way identical to the involvement a playgoer has in taking part or in being with the actors living out the drama. For example, the audience enters into the turmoil that Hamlet is experiencing and it becomes an experience shared by the audience which identifies and becomes one with his turmoil. As a member of the audience we experience the turmoil and know it in the experiential sense of the word 'know'. In an identical manner the coder experiences the members' struggle with the Great Mother, her good and terrible qualities. This experiencing does involve a firm knowledge of the concept's specifications but it is the logic of the soul, that Christou (1976) discusses, which establishes the meaning of the experience.

The complexity of human experience must be taken into account in our attempts to focus on a particular dynamic. For example, in observing the member's anima, the coder's shadow may come into play making it difficult if not impossible for the coder to record the events from the perspective of the anima. Relating this again to the analogy of a play, we may fail to see Willie's anguish in Arthur Miller's play *The Death of a Salesman* because we are viewing him from the perspective of his son. It is because of this complexity of human experience that our research program calls for more than one coder and that checks are frequently made to see that the coders are experiencing the drama in terms of its story and not solely from their own personal dilemmas. I used the word 'solely' and I wish to stress my reason for doing so. The logic of the soul involves being-in-the-world which can not thereby bracket off some part of our being. What is required of a coder is that she/he be aware to the fullest extent possible of the existence of those personal dynamics which may color the experiencing of the event. This is not always possible and hence the need for other coders. The basic point must not be lost sight of, however, by an over concern for intercoder reliability. Any attempt to understand the dynamics of small groups must be based on the sanctity of experiencing the drama that is unfolding in the group. It is understandable in light of this approach why we use such phrases as 'the group appears as if' or 'there is a sense that'. As an observer we

Introduction

become part of the drama and only in this way can we experience what is taking place.

A drama is experienced symbolically; it can never be conveyed in a literal language. Any attempt to describe a drama in literal terms would be to put into its stead an account or a report. Symbolic language expresses the vital integrity of the drama. A myth, as one form of symbolic language, is able to express experientially the essence of a human dilemma – a drama – as no literal description, no matter how extensive, could convey. Thus any conceptual framework which attempts to seize an experience in a language form must attempt to do so by specifying the experience in symbolic language. The Matrix Model, which is presented later in Chapter One, is a conceptual framework that examines the dramas in a small group in symbolic language. It provides provisional ways – conceptual structures – to derive meanings from the group's transactions. They are not the sole prescriptions of meaning. The autonomous nature of the transactions challenge as well as confirm the validity of the concepts to give meaning to the drama. But there is also the extraperceptual and creative input of the transpersonality – the universal soul of the collective unconscious. The transpersonality reaches out from the individual personality and intuits the existence of unusual and primal patterns of behavior and meaning. Symbolic language transcends the immediate here and now, but as a bridge through time, links the immediate with primordial experience heading toward a transcendental consciousness. If an observer is to experience and understand the symbolic drama evolving in the group then the meaning of the drama cannot be left to the sole employment of a conceptual framework if the drama is to maintain its integrity, for the integrity of the drama demands that all three elements must be involved and in dialog.

The practical import of this logic is illustrated in our experiences in training coders. Some coders are unable to experience, for example, the Great Mother in a small group. They take the specifiers for the Great Mother and employ them as definitions. They look for behaviors of nurturing, protecting, support and in doing so completely miss the drama. They have difficulty seeing the symbolic qualities of the specifiers and are trying to make these symbolic specifiers literal descriptions. Such individuals cannot be employed as coders because they are unable to break out of the confinement their egos are imposing on their personalities. They are unable to experience consciously the drama of the group, but only the apparent interactions among the members. Our method requires a sound knowledge of the conceptual framework, the openness to experience the symbolic drama of the evolving group and the integration of the transpersonality, all in an exploratory dialog.

Much of our work has been pushing at the edges of the existing theories in analytical psychology. When any group of investigators is exploring new or only recently discovered ways of understanding it is most likely that differences arise among them. These differences give evidence of the insights, the knowledge, and the questioning which enriches and furthers their research. The chapters in this volume reflect that tradition.

To this point the research program has been the focus of the discussion. It is understandable that a reader would conclude that the research program has been our major agenda. It has been a major concern but not by itself – solely as the search for truth – for it has always been a part of an educational project. The research program has been motivated without question by a primary curiosity to know but it has also been motivated as a challenge first to demonstrate and then to engage those skeptical colleagues who cling to various disguised forms of logical positivism. Paradigms that claim to be empirical must be subject to critical scrutiny in the open market place of free enquiry. This aspect of our work has been a part of our educational project. But there is another aspect more consequential than the dialogs on the scientific soundness of analytical psychology and this is the contribution analytical psychology can make by being used to develop fundamental changes in the ways educative processes are conceived and employed.

Schooling in western societies has taught that we can think our way out of difficulties. That is to say, the reflective processes, properly managed by the ego, are the means to a constructive and productive way of handling the problems encountered in life. To some extent there is validity to this position but its failure to take into account other components of the psyche creates an incomplete if not a distorted picture. Our investigations of personal transformations in small groups have attempted to demonstrate how, in educational settings, it is possible to encounter and have these other psychic components be part of the dynamics in a learning community as we have envisioned the small group.

Transformative education (Boyd and Myers, 1988) recognizes the polarity of good and evil in human nature. The struggles involved in working through the problems arising from the polarities in our human nature are the source of our personal growth and our movement toward personality integration. When we fail to help a person to know that these polarities exist as givens, too often the learner assumes a guilt for what she/he considers an aberration of personality. Today a serious condition exists in most societies where these polarities in the human psyche are no longer under religious or cultural control and are freely expressed, threatening the very fabric of the society. I am not advocating a new system of social control or a return to previous forms of social or religious controls, quite the opposite. Teachers must help learners to

Introduction

recognize the existence of polarities, such as good and evil, in the human psyche, and within a learning community develop ways to accept and work through a more integrative relationship with the counter elements of the polarities. This is one way of viewing a personal transformation, and one of the ways we have studied in the research program reported here.

One final observation: I find it perplexing and disturbing to see how little awareness there is of analytical psychology in education. It is impossible to pick up a representative work in analytical psychology and fail to see the implication it has for education. Its acceptance in religious ministry is clearly evident and crosses many denominations. It has been used as a conceptual structure to more fully understand literature, dance and the dramatic arts. But analytical psychology, as yet, has a very limited audience in education. It is our hope that our efforts may in some way increase the audience.

An overview of the content of the chapters will reveal the organizational structure by making explicit the relationships among the various topics presented in the book. The chapters report on a set of related study areas which are part of the research program of the Laboratory for the Study of Group Dynamics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The research program is involved in investigating the development of collective consciousness in the social and cultural systems of the small group in relation to the processes of personal transformation being worked through by members of such groups. Except in cases where the narrative required it, there are few cross-references among the chapters. The interrelationships among the studies, however can be readily perceived. They are all part of a whole.

Chapter One presents the Matrix Model which serves as the conceptual framework for the research program. It views the group as being composed of three interacting systems – the social, cultural and personality systems. The interactions among these three systems are examined from six points of view. The six points of view are the structural, developmental, adaptive, content, transactional, and gestalt. The group-as-a-whole must be viewed as a matrix where systems of structures and dynamic forces, represented in the points of view, are reflected in our explanations.

The second chapter moves us directly into the presentation of our research methodologies. The task before us was to take the framework provided by the Matrix Model and combine it with the theories of analytical psychology. Central to our research program was the investigation of the development of consciousness. Such studies were seen as the very core of investigating personal transformations. It would appear therefore that we would immediately start on the development of methodologies that would provide data on individual personal

transformations. This was not the initial direction we took. Our previous studies had shown us the critical and focal role the social system plays in the lives of group members. On the basis of this knowledge, we began with first looking at the social system. Accordingly we constructed a methodology by which to examine the development of consciousness as it occurs in the social system. This work is reported in some detail in Chapter Two. The chapter concludes with a discussion of key issues related to the conduct of empirical studies.

The development of consciousness in the social system is affected by many variables but high on the list of such factors is the influential group member. The influential member has long been recognized as a prime mover in the life of a small group. It was important to us to understand in what ways the influential member contributed to or hindered the development of consciousness in the social system. We proposed the concept of the focal person and then proceeded to develop a methodology by which to identify and investigate the focal person's roles in the social system. Chapter Three presents this methodology. Several significant questions were raised in this part of our research and those which were central to this enquiry have been identified in the chapter.

The focal person often plays a key role in the movement of the social system from one phase to the next phase of development. But the question remains: What processes are involved in periods of transition? An extensive body of research supports the notion of phase development in small groups but little hard evidence exists to explain the phenomenon of transition from one phase to the next. Having such knowledge is critical to fill in our account of the development of consciousness as it occurs in the social system. A transition period has many qualities which are similar to experiencing a loss or accepting a new reality. An analogous relationship could be argued between what occurs in a transition period in a small group and a personal loss experienced by an individual. The processes of grieving appear to characterize both situations. The notion of social grieving was proposed and a methodology was developed to test the notion. In Chapter Four a systematic account is provided which traces the development of the notion. The methodology is described and illustrative case material is also included.

Chapter Five presents the concept of episodic themes. This concept forms a bridge between the group-as-a-whole and the individual members. The group provides the context for a drama to be worked out and to the extent that the individual accepts the possibilities which exist in the drama of the group, then to that extent she/he realizes the potentials and works on her/his individuation. The chapter contains a description of the methodology and case material.

Introduction

The internal dialogs which episodic themes initiate involve the manifestation of different psychic elements. In Chapter Six we examine the roles that the anima and animus take in intrapersonal dialogs and the influence they have upon behavior at the unconscious level. To investigate these influences we first had to conceptualize the anima and animus at the various stages of an individual's personal development. From that point we then could develop sets of specifics which made it possible for observers to identify the presence of the anima or animus in the behaviors of an individual group member.

Chapter Seven presents case material on an individual group member. The chapter attempts to achieve an integration between conceptual content and concrete observations. The case material is both an exposition and an explanation of the notions and concepts presented in the Matrix Model and in our methodologies which reflect our research program.

The educational impact of Jung's work is often missed and it has certainly received minimum emphasis. That is a serious shortcoming that needs to be addressed. The last chapter is a start in correcting that condition. In Chapter Eight the question is addressed of what the leader is doing while all these things are taking place. What does the leader do to facilitate the expansion of consciousness? The question is answered by presenting a systematic examination of approaches which have been shown to facilitate not only interpersonal dialogs but more critically, intrapersonal dialogues toward the expansion of consciousness.

Robert D. Boyd

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Introduction

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Chapter one

The Matrix Model

A conceptual framework for small group analysis

Robert D. Boyd

The small group from six points of view

I take my place at the circle of tables. Shortly I am joined by other men and women who have entered the room and make their way to one or another of the ten empty chairs arranged around the tables. Some stop to exchange greetings, others engage in light conversation before sitting in the chair that they have selected. After a few minutes all have taken their places at the tables and an acknowledged hush falls over the group. I look about me catching the accepting smiles of some members, noting the poker faces and the preoccupied expressions of the other members. I am once again in the chair of the leader. I am being looked to as one who, by designated position and expectations based on cultural socializations, will guide, instruct, support and, counsel the group and the members. The dynamic field of the group remains uncompleted until my part as leader has been entered as a dynamic within that field.

The initial question would appear to be: How do I define my role in the group? As critical as this question is, there is a more fundamental question that must be answered. In order to address the question of what a leader's role might, could or should be, it is necessary to have clearly in mind how you, as a leader, are conceptualizing the nature of a small group. My interventions to guide, instruct, support and counsel both members and the group are structured upon my conceptualization of the small group. The first task of any leader is to have clearly in mind a conceptual metaphor, model, or paradigm which gives some understanding to the complexity of the phenomena that are being rapidly played out and to which the leader's interventions must contribute insights and guidance. The direct relationship of grounded practice to its operational framework is recognized by any thoughtful practitioner and needs no further argument here.

Many conceptual frameworks have been put forward (Cartwright and Zander, 1968; Mullen and Goethals, 1987). They have all been supported by empirical studies of one form or another, or case studies that are offered as documentation or as an argument for their operational

validity. They are different ways of making sense of the complex and complicated phenomenon we speak of as the small group. The frameworks can be differentiated by examining the sets of assumptions upon which the frameworks are based. From a more global perspective, these different ways of explaining this phenomenon are a function of the observer's *Weltanschauung*. Investigators and practitioners make their most meaningful contributions as they live in good faith with their *Weltanschauung*. Such a statement may strike those who are looking for a more unified social psychology as a tolerant position to hold but one that is entirely unacceptable and at best a disappointing state of affairs. But at this point in time, we are a long way from arriving at one accepted conceptual paradigm by which to explain the dynamics of the small group. There is a more fundamental fallacy in such an expectation, for it reflects a serious lack of understanding. It fails to realize that the phenomenon of the small group can be viewed from the perspectives of different questions and frames of references. Any unity that may be achieved will not be by insisting upon a universally accepted paradigm but by acknowledging the various aspects of the *Weltanschauungs* that have played a part in structuring our views of the dynamics of the small group. Thus what unity we may find will be a function of the question we ask.

The literature on small groups contains many conceptual frameworks which describe and explain the nature and dynamics of the small group. It is not my intention to review this literature but that is not to say that I will ignore it. This chapter presents my Matrix Model. In the presentation of my work there will be many occasions when I will note my indebtedness to other investigators whose work I have built upon or whose work has clarified points upon which there are clear differences.

I propose that any conceptual framework of the small group must attempt to deal with six points of view. They are, the structural, adaptive, developmental, transactional, Gestalt, and content points of view. Each of these are important in order to perceive the nature of the small group and critical to an understanding of the Matrix Model. They form a general framework within which to conceptually view the small group. Collectively these six points of view constitute the Matrix Model. Each point of view will be explained in turn, thus building the framework of the Matrix Model as the discussion progresses. The reader may find it helpful in reading about the six points of view to refer to Figure 1.1 (page 22) which presents the Matrix Model in diagram form.

The structural point of view

Individuals compose small groups and most paradigms focus only on the individuals, the roles they take, the status they have in the group, and

their patterns of interactions. To explain what is happening in the group by observing individual members is not only an accepted mode of investigation but a very instructive one. But from the structural perspective the individual member is only one component system. There is also a social and a cultural system. For the present, a discussion of the cultural system will be set aside in order to first illustrate the existence of the social system, which is evident in the following incident.

The setting is a seminar for psychology majors. Different members over the course of the last two sessions have suggested agendas that the group could work on but none of these have been adopted. When they were put forward they were explored politely but no commitment was made to adopt them after they were briefly discussed. It appeared that the members could not come to any consensus. A general sense of apathy was present among the membership because, in their view, nothing had been resolved. Some members pushed their chairs back from the table and appeared to have physically withdrawn from the group. Other members looked apprehensive while others looked bored. A silence fell on the group. At this point a member whose agenda had not been accepted moved his chair back to the table and said, 'I think we are waiting for Dr B to step in and lead us. I think we have abdicated our autonomy and this makes me damn angry.' An immediate upsurge of energy can be felt in the situation. There is a rush of agreements and denials. Members find it difficult to break into the rapidly moving discussion. It is difficult to conceive that this is the same group of some ten minutes earlier.

How can we describe this phenomenon other than to posit the existence of some entity different from the individual membership in the group? What was observed was not the summation of that membership but the expression of a structure that has its own existence. Groups are frequently described as manifesting a sense of trust, while at the same time, it is recognized that the trust that exists between members can vary within a wide range from little to a great deal. The illustration above is offered as evidence that, in addition to the structure of membership, there is the structure of a social system. Viewing the small group as a social system does not replace or discount the view of the group as involving interactions among individual members. Small groups can be examined in terms of the interactions among members or personality systems, but the small group can also be viewed as a dynamic entity – as an existing social system.

The social system, unlike the individual who brings historical content into the small group, comes into being at the initial period of the small group's formation. Its unique identity is developed in the course of the group's life. The social system comes to have its own history. As a dynamic structure it asserts itself on other structures within the small group

and expresses its own nature in the life of the group. It is a proactive and reactive system from the initial moments of the group to that moment when the group terminates. It is a system entirely defined in a specified time – the span of the small group's existence. In that sense we may speak of it as a system which is focused on the here and now and recognizes nothing other than its own history as being pertinent and valid.

To the personality system and the social system we add a third structural entity – the group's cultural system. Unlike the social system which comes into existence and is terminated within the lifespan of the small group, the cultural system, like the personality systems, can trace a continuity before and after the group. The small group exists in a cultural context; it is an entity within a given society. The group is directly affected by the cultural structures and patterns of the society in which the group exists. This is evident in the pattern of relationships between members and the designated leader, in the values that are expressed in the group, in the numerous mores and rituals that get played out in the group. The influence of the cultural system can also be observed in the ties that members seek between the group and the larger society. The following statements are frequently heard in small groups. 'In what ways is this group like the ones I work with?' 'I can't see how what we are doing here can be used in the groups we work with.' 'What we are doing here is so unreal.' It is evident in these remarks that a group is always linked to a larger context even when the relationship is not made explicit. The culture of a society is every bit a part of the group's structural framework as are the personality systems of the members who compose the group.

The impression should not be left, especially at this point in time, that we may look for only one predominant culture which serves as the formative structure of a small group. A small group may be drawn from two or more cultural publics within a given society. In such cases there exists the potential for growth as well as the basis for serious conflict. In so far as the difference among cultural publics may serve as the potential for growth, we have an example of the formula of polarity to which Jung so frequently spoke.

In summary, a small group can be conceptualized from a structural point of view as having three interacting and dynamic systems: the social, personality, and cultural systems. Each is concurrent in the life of the group yet unique in both the matters it deals with and the manner in which it functions. Each system is autonomous in that it can be viewed as having its own agenda in dealing with the primary tasks to be encountered and resolved. The manner in which these tasks are handled and resolved comes to define its own identity in the sense that its unique development can be described. These qualities of the structural systems will be treated in greater detail as we examine the other points of view.

The developmental point of view

There have been a number of studies which describe the small group from the developmental point of view. Notable among these contributions have been the works of Bales and Strodtbeck (1951), Bennis and Shepard (1956), and Tuckman (1965). Hill and Gruner (1973) reported on over 100 papers written on small group development. These studies describe the group as a whole progressing through phases of development. Here, there is a fundamental difference between these studies and our studies which lead to the formulation of the Matrix Model. The Matrix Model views the small group as a collective concept constituted by three systems, the social, personality, and cultural, which are the dynamic components of the small group. Unlike previous investigations of group phase development, I propose that each of the three systems progresses through its own phase of development. The concrete formulations of the developmental phases for each of the systems will be presented in the following section. In focusing upon the developmental point of view we must continue to recognize that all six points of view are interconnected and interrelated; however, the developmental and the adaptive points of view are tied conceptually in the way they are formulated at the observation stage. It is because of this relationship, that a more meaningful discussion of the developmental point of view can be presented in conjunction with our explanation of the adaptive point of view.

The adaptive point of view

The adaptive point of view describes the ways in which the three systems encounter and work at three primary tasks. Each system faces the tasks of (1) *defining* the nature of its identity, (2) *establishing* modes of relating, and (3) *developing* means to relate to reality-adaptive demands. The three tasks are discussed immediately below and illustrative examples from group observations are given to show how each system may deal with these tasks, which may provide some concreteness to our treatment of these primary tasks.

The social system without some definable form of an identity cannot be related to and, accordingly, would have no meaning for the members. It is not uncommon to hear expressed in the initial sessions of a small group, 'I don't know what this group is. I don't know whether I can trust this group or not.' For a group that has been developing a sense of its identity we hear very different expressions. 'I have good feeling about this group. I don't think we are clear yet about what we are about but there is commitment here.'

The task of establishing identity is fundamental to the personality

system. Individuals can be observed working at establishing their identity in the group: as a person to be trusted, a person who can be counted on to help make decisions, as a person who is not afraid to work. Some can be observed reworking their identities. For example, the social system is struggling with the issues of control and authority and a member identifying with the conflicts these issues raise for him/her personally, can be observed struggling with his/her personal crisis of autonomy. 'I have often found it difficult to accept authority figures and I am beginning to see how this has sometimes prevented me from relating to others in a positive way.'

The cultural system works at establishing its identity when it focuses attention on the development of and adherence to mores, roles, norms, and group values. These serve to set the boundaries of the group's unique cultural structure and how that structure is to relate to the other two systems as well as to the larger society.

The second primary task is the establishing of modes of relating. Specific modes of relating become dominant in the social system at different times in the life of the small group. At a given time there is a sense in the social system that aggressive behavior is acceptable and even appropriate. At other times the social system's *emotionality* may be one of dependency which is directed toward the leader. This mode of relationship may be clearly descriptive of the social system although, simultaneously, it is possible to observe certain individual members who do not overtly subscribe to the dependency *emotionality* being expressed in the social system. Our reading of the social system is not based on the summation of the members' behaviors, a point that has been emphasized earlier, but on the general sense of the social system itself. To explain these modes of relating expressed by the social system we have turned to the contributions Bion (1959) has made in his studies of emotionalities in the small group. He has described the emotionality of dependency, as illustrated above, as a basic assumption culture of the group. Stock and Thelen (1958), Thelen (1959), and Slater (1966) have extended Bion's work and have also contributed corroborating evidence to Bion's original work.

Since the structural perspective views the social system as an entity, metaphorically as an organism (Thelen, 1959), it must out of necessity develop specific modes of relationships to deal with other entities that it encounters. For example, the social system develops specific ways of relating to the leader as its agenda changes. A member who is radically out of step with the social system's mode of relating can be viewed as obstructing, acting in conspiracy or withdrawing.

The interpersonal relationships of individuals has long been a focus of research and an extensive body of literature reports on the modes of relating employed by members of small groups (Penland, 1974). At any

time in the life of the group, members can be observed working at developing or avoiding relationships with other members, as well with the social or cultural systems. Every member is faced with the primary task that involves the decision whether to approach or avoid a relationship and how this is to be done.

The cultural system also encounters the task of relating to other entities and issues. The cultural and the social system are frequently observed as being at cross purposes. For example, the cultural system may have an agenda of furthering a particular norm – personal boundaries must be respected – while the social system is striving to establish trust in the group. The cultural system may resist a confrontation through flight. In another sphere the question is raised in the group, what is the relationship of the group to the larger society? Here we are observing the cultural system struggling with the primary task of evolving a mode of relating.

There is a third primary adaptive task that all three systems must face and handle – developing means to more fully deal with reality-adaptive demands. Although in a later section we will go into some detail describing the nature of these reality-adaptive demands, a few words of explanation are needed to clarify what is meant here by 'reality-adaptive demands'. Its meaning is framed within analytical psychology. There are three constituent parts to what we call reality and these are manifested in the three existential dynamics, the social, personality, and cultural systems. Each interrelates and is shaped by the projections put on the active environment which is encountered and which confronts the three systems. Thus reality is constructed from those evolving transactions. It is necessary if each system is to function in this reality to work through some form of resolution to the demands which arise in these transactions. These are the experiences which lead to the expansion of consciousness, which in turn effect and lead to a greater integration of personality, a more fully functioning social system, and a richer and more flexible cultural system.

It is readily accepted that individuals must learn to deal with the world in which they find themselves. What has been presented above concerning the reality-adaptive task can be seen as a task individuals face every day. The interactions an individual has with every aspect of his/her environment confronts the individual with demands of one sort or another which play an active role in forming the individual's projection of the world.

In the reality-adaptive sphere the social system is manifested in a sequence of archetypal symbols (for example, the Great Mother) which herald a body of unconscious content. For the social system to progress through this sequence, each archetypal element has to be encountered, confronted, and resolved. These are the demands of the reality-adaptive

task and the ways in which these demands evolve define this dimension of the social system. As I will discuss in greater detail later, the social system must struggle through the stages from the Great Mother to the Birth of the Hero. These are the unconscious content that is projected into the life of the group.

The situation is similar for the cultural system. In analytical psychology the concept of collective consciousness is used to describe what are the active adaptive processes at work in the cultural system. These adaptive processes may prove to be destructive as was the case with National Socialism in Germany (Jung, 1959). When a cultural system is adaptive it is encountering the task; the resolution is a related but also a separate issue.

Thus far three points of view have been spoken to. The structural point of view posited the existence of three discrete, autonomous, concurrent, and interrelating systems, the social, personality, and cultural. The developmental perspective described the systems as dynamic and evolving components of the small group. The adaptive point of view identified three primary tasks which each system must work at: defining the nature of its identity, establishing modes of relating, developing means to relate to reality-adaptive demands. At this time it may be instructive to present the Matrix Model in the form of a diagram. Figure 1.1 presents a visualization of the three points of view as they have been described. The three primary tasks are set to the left of the cube. The developmental perspective is shown along the side of the cube progressing from the face of the cube upwards. The intent here is to picture the time dimension. The three systems are listed at the top of the cube. The three remaining points of view will be discussed in the following text.

The transactional point of view

There are three points of view that have not as yet been discussed. We will now consider each in turn starting with the transactional point of view.

The transactional perspective asserts that whatever is happening in any constituent part of the matrix affects in some manner what is happening in the other parts of the matrix. This does not mean that a particular act or a specific transaction is to be identified exclusively to one cell of the matrix and any repercussions are to be noted if they are observed occurring in other parts of the matrix. The basis for such a misinterpretation may be readily appreciated when we recall that coding schemes in social psychology demand an exclusive categorizing of behavior. Were this approach to be employed to make the Matrix Model operational, a given behavior or event would be seen as a discrete

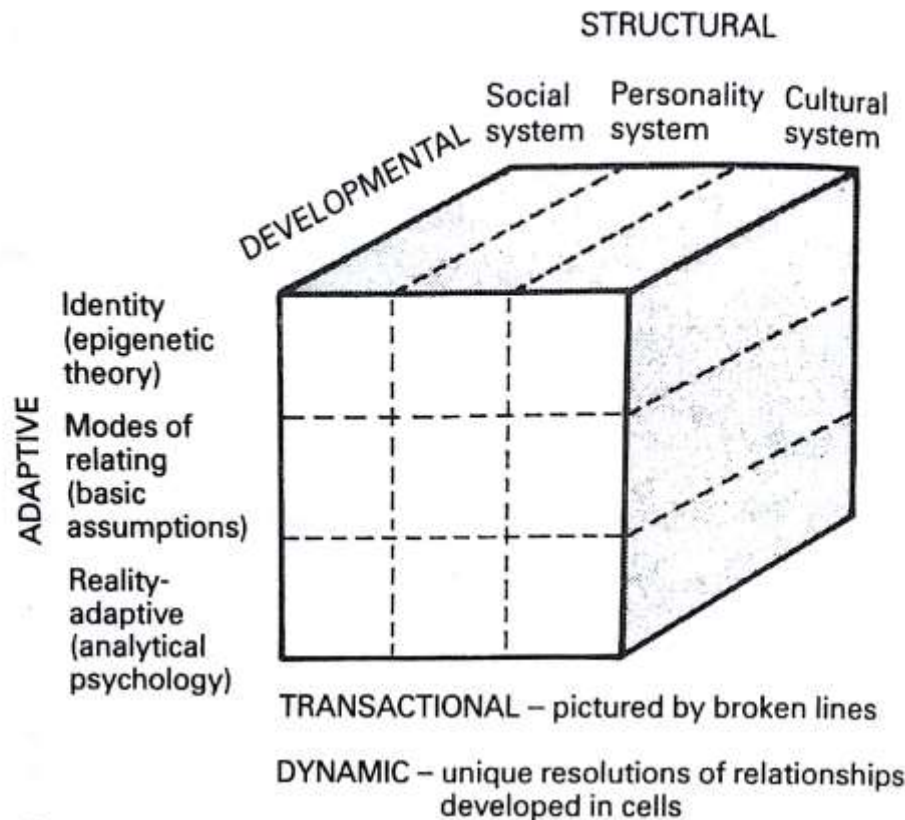


Figure 1.1 Matrix Model showing points of view and theoretical frameworks

phenomenon matching the specifications of one and only one cell of the matrix. For example, an observation would be coded into the Social System–Identity cell. This would completely miss the rich meaning imbedded in the word ‘transactional’ which conveys explicitly the trans quality of effect.

At this point a question may be raised: If, as it appears to be proposed here, a behavior should not be viewed as a discrete form or type of behavior, codable to a specific category of acts, why, then are specific cells identified in the Matrix Model? The answer, quite simply, lies in the notion of the transactional nature of experience. A behavior is codable to a given cell but its meaning transcends its coded designation. A definable behavior, such as a member speaking about his/her difficulty in expressing intimacy, may be treated empirically and accordingly coded as an act having the primary intentionality of dealing with self-identity and therefore coded in the Identity–Personality cell. But, in addition, it may be directed to and be reflected from the issue of intimacy being worked through in the social system. The transactional point of view enables us to place the meaning of a lived experience within the matrix as it affects the group-as-a-whole. This realization brings us to the next point of view.

The Gestalt point of view

Viewing the group-as-a-whole is critical to an understanding of what is taking place in the group. One way to conceptualize the small group is to view it metaphorically as an organism (Thelen, 1959). There are different levels of empirical evidence that support taking the Gestalt point of view. One common observation of a small group is the change which occurs in the dynamics of a group with the change of its membership even if that change only involves one person. Another observation supporting the Gestalt perspective is the noticeable change which occurs when different cultural norms or values are introduced. It is not only the cultural system that looks different, but different observable transactions related directly to these norms and values can be seen occurring in the social and personality systems. A case in point is the introduction of the norm which asserts that what does not appear to be an honest answer can be confronted. Frequently, when such a norm is introduced as a construct of the cultural system, the social system initially becomes more dependent upon the leader for there is a fear that confrontations may get out of control. For some members this norm allows them to begin to explore personal feelings and even to begin to deal with unconscious content. Other members are obviously frightened by what may happen and become silent or even withdraw as active members of the group.

Any one of the three systems affects the group as a whole. The group is also a different entity as it focuses on a given task and as it moves through different phases of its development or as it evolves as a unique entity. Most of the time it is understandable why we focus upon particular aspects of a group we are observing; however, to lose sight of the wholeness of the group has the serious possibility of distorting our understanding of what is taking place in the group. An intervention that is made to help a group deal with a particular issue or problem should be first considered, as far as it is reasonable, with the group-as-a-whole in view. An intervention directed at one aspect may be the result of focusing on a particular system or task, and the consequence may prove to be confusing if not disruptive to the group.

The content point of view

Finally there is the content point of view. Transactions which take place in the context of a small group can be delineated in a variety of category paradigms. One perspective is to observe verbal inputs and to classify them into two sets of utterances, for example instrumental and socio-emotional (Bales, 1950). Other verbal category frameworks examine statements from a problem-solving model. Certain clinical models identify the various types of verbal utterances using category systems

that yield evidence on such psychological factors as mechanisms of defence, transference, and repression. Other content frameworks focus only on behaviors and classify them into particular sets of categories depending on the conceptual framework of the investigator. One such framework employs approach and avoidance categories. Examples of these various category systems have been reported by Hill and Gruner (1973), Argyris (1957), and Stogdill (1959).

Content refers to the forms the transactions take in the life of the group. This point needs to be emphasized because it is so often assumed that only individual members engage in and originate transactions in a group. Transactions are not simply the interactions between members: they describe the actions of all three systems. There are observable transactions within the social system itself, as it struggles to evolve from one phase to the next. And similarly in the case of the cultural system as new values are adopted and old ones are discarded.

In the Matrix Model we observe symbolic content and categorize transactions which occur within all three systems from that perspective. Symbolic content makes use of the subject matter of manifest content but examines it with the question: Is there a message behind the literal message? In other terms, the task here is to discern what is the symbolic meaning of the experience. Bion (1959) made an important contribution to the empirical study of symbolic content by phrasing the observation of symbolic phenomena in the terms 'as if' in describing the sense of the transaction he was attempting to identify. For example, in describing the basic assumption culture of Fight/Flight, where the culture of Flight was dominant, he spoke of it 'as if the group were fleeing from some enemy it was unable to confront'. Symbolic analysis of transactions frequently makes use of such images because they capture the essence of the meaning that is embedded at one basic level of the transaction.

Symbolic content is set out in descriptive terms totally unlike the variety of terms used to describe rational content, such as literal, conceptual, practical, and propositional. Symbolic content is different in that it is not subject to delineated specifiers and fixed definitions, but is extremely variable because its meaning is grounded in the experience that it portrays. For example, aggressive, attacking, criticizing, and opposing forms of behavior may in one situation be seen as expressing counterdependency while in another situation the symbolic content of these behaviors is the expression of Fight. The difference between these situations is the meaning these behaviors have in the context of the group's life – that is to say, in the symbolic nature of the transaction. The point here is not to criticize the use of the other forms of content as legitimate bases for the study of transactions within small groups, but rather to differentiate the nature of symbolic content as it is used here in the study of transactions within the small group.

In the section which follows, symbolic content is the focus of our observations because it reveals a depth perception of the existence of the three primary tasks (identity, emotionality, reality-adaptive) which the three systems (social, personality, cultural) work at during the life course of the group. The central role given to the tasks is readily explained in that the account of a small group's life is organized around the three tasks, and a discussion of the tasks is a functional approach by which to bring together all six points of view. In following this plan, the developmental and transactional points of view are woven into the discussion which explains the ways in which each of the three systems works on the basic tasks. The Gestalt point of view becomes evident in the picturing of the interrelationships which reveal the wholeness of the group as an existential entity.

The three primary tasks

The small group is an existential entity. It is recognized as an entity only so long as these systems continue to work on the primary tasks. It is in that sense that the small group is described in phenomenological terms as an organism. This view of the group reintroduces the adaptive point of view. As was proposed above, the adaptive point of view serves as a dynamic perspective through which the other points of view may be explained in the course of a group's life. Thus an understanding of the adaptive point of view is critical. This means that if we are to gain a working knowledge of the small group based on the adaptive point of view, it then will be necessary to identify and set out conceptual schemas that operationalize the three primary tasks which are the adaptive perspective. Earlier, in our discussion of the adaptive point of view, three primary tasks were identified: (1) define the nature of the system's identity, (2) establish modes of relating, (3) develop means to relate to reality-adaptive demands. Although in our earlier discussion there were general descriptions of the three primary tasks, these are not adequate to serve as the basis for a systematic observation of these tasks. It is necessary to move to a more specific descriptive level of these tasks if studies on small groups are to be undertaken. Thus the critical question arises, for example: How do you observe an individual, a social system, or a cultural system working at defining its identity? Also, is there a different schema for each of the three systems? A number of other questions arise when considering what has to be done to move our initial observations first into more careful and systematic observations and when to determine if an explanatory conceptual framework exists.

It would appear from what has been set out above that the conduct of empirical studies proceeds in a very logical and systematic fashion. That may well be the situation in some cases but it was not quite the case in

the development of the Matrix Model. There were many explorations, some on the main route and others somewhat tangential to the development of the Matrix Model. It is not my intention to chronicle its development here; however, some reference to its history may provide the reader with a better understanding and give helpful insights into our work. Therefore, in explaining and discussing the frameworks used to operationalize the primary task, I will present the material as a historical account, for the most part; however, I will deal only with the investigations that pertain to the topic at hand.

Identity

Each system, the social, personality, or cultural, has the task of defining its boundaries, demarcating itself from the other whether the other is an item or agent within or between systems, establishing its unique characteristics, and furthering its developing qualities as a functioning entity. These components of the identity task may be illustrated by examining trust development (Gibb and Gibb, 1978), problems of dependency and interdependency (Bennis and Shepard, 1956), and boundary awareness (Slater, 1966). The social system of a small group evolves its own identity. It is described in specific ways by its members: 'This is a hard working group.' 'I see this group as very different from other groups I belong to.' What has been observed occurring within the social system can also be observed with individual members who can be seen reflecting on values they hold, the kind of person they are, and not infrequently, the kind of person they would like to be, as well as the personal goals that are shaping their lives. One of the major contributions that a small group can give to its membership is the opportunity to rework aspects of their identities, moving these aspects to a more favorable and constructive resolution. More will be said on this subject later. Finally, the cultural system, as is the case for the social and personality systems, must work at defining its identity. From its initial session onward the small group is involved in clarifying and evolving commonly held sets of mores, values, expectations, and norms which define the dynamic identity of the cultural system. For example, in a managerial team, it is tacitly understood that openly hostile confrontations between members are not acceptable behavior: this is a norm that defines one identity aspect of this group's culture.

Erikson's (1950) epigenetic theory was used as the framework to conceptualize the task of identity for each of the three systems. The decision to employ this theory was initiated by an insight that came to me as I was consulting with a small group of managers who were exploring ways of working more harmoniously together. Watching them struggling with identity issues, the thought struck me that there perhaps

was a similar pattern to group phase development as there was to the stages of ego development. At the same period I was deeply involved in an area of research in which I was employing the epigenetic theory in a study on motivation. My other project at that time was focused on studying small groups in which I was attempting to get a more comprehensive picture of a small group than were offered by those conceptual models then available in the literature.

I had developed a methodology (Boyd, 1961) based on Erikson's ego stage epigenetic theory by which I could code verbal utterances into the eight stages. This methodology was used to examine the conjecture that the social system of a small group goes through identity phases analogous to those stages in ego development. Davie (1971) analyzed the complete protocol of a small group that extended over fifteen weeks, some 37 hours. The data showed that the social system had a general configuration that paralleled the predicted sequence. Although the results were seen as encouraging, if not entirely supportive of our thesis, it was not until later that we realized that we had employed an inappropriate method in this study. At the time it was quite understandable why we coded individual utterances to get a reading on the group as that was the approach employed by other investigators whose empirical methods we took as models (Bales, 1950; Stock and Thelen, 1958). Although well aware of the teachings of Field psychology, I failed to heed them in the guidance I gave Davie in applying my method to the study of the small group. The sum of the parts generally does not give an accurate picture of the whole: coding individual behavior may provide some insights as to what the social system is about but it may also completely misrepresent what is occurring in the social system. If either the social or cultural system is the focus of study then it must be viewed as an entity – a method of study that had been set out earlier by Bion (1959).

The task became, in light of these realizations, to develop a method to observe the social system based on the epigenetic theory. Instead of describing individuals confronting the epigenetic crises, the task was to describe a social system as it encountered the sequence of crises analogous to those which evolve in individual epigenetic development. We will not examine here the epistemological issues which may arise in the minds of some readers on the question of translating a theory explaining individual psychology to a schema explaining phenomena in social psychology. For the present we refer the issue to Erikson's writings where he relates the epigenetic theory to both the social and cultural domains (Erikson, 1959). My initial insight was realized after much labor. A methodology to observe and code social system phenomena into identity phases was developed from extensive studies on both ongoing and video-taped groups.

This methodology has been used in a number of studies (Boyd et al., 1980; Kushel, 1980; Myers, 1986; Ullrich, 1987; White, 1976). On reflection, it is not difficult to see the appeal of Erikson's work in providing categories for the social system's phase development. It is well documented (Bradford, 1978) that the social system first struggles with the problem of trust and mistrust. After it has developed some form of resolution between the polarities of trusting and mistrusting, it moves on to the next phase – encountering the issues clustered around the crisis of autonomy. When the group has come to realize and to accept the exercise of its autonomy, it proceeds to assert its initiative, which is quickly blended with work activities. The carrying out of these work activities leads to a sense of a 'group identity' in that the social system expresses clear evidence of the goals it is seeking and values that define and support its identity as a group. Once this phase has been firmly established a transition occurs that moves the group into less of a 'work-conscious' group and noticeably more of a group that openly accepts and readily fosters intimacy. The sense of intimacy in the group comes into conflict with expressions of isolation which is manifest in a variety of symbolic content. For example, the sense of isolation is felt in the uniqueness of this group compared with other groups. The intimacy in the group seems impossible to convey to others with whom one is intimate in the world outside of the small group. On the one hand there is a feeling of intimacy in the group but this intimacy can, on the other hand, give a sense of isolation with the world outside of the small group. In addition the social system faces other concerns, including sexuality (Slater, 1966) and problems of boundary definitions (Gibbard and Hartman, 1974). Following the resolution of intimacy vs. isolation phase, the social system begins to address its relationships with and its contributions to the larger society. This phase corresponds to Erikson's Generativity stage. The final phase – the phase of integrity – frequently consumes the total time of the last meeting of the small group. In this session the worth of the social system, or what Erikson speaks of as the stage of Integrity, is examined as the final phase of the social system. Individual members become the spokespersons for this phenomenon. 'Was all the struggling worth it?' 'There was a good deal of grief in our life together, but I will miss it when it is over.' It is not uncommon for food to be brought into this last session. Slater (1966) very ably labels this phenomenon as the 'Last Supper'. The symbolism of the food at this point in the life of the small group would clearly support this interpretation. The sense that one has in being a part of this event further corroborates this interpretation.

The epigenetic theory was initially proposed as an explanation of identity development in the course of an individual's life. Thus it is unnecessary to argue for its application to the personality system within

the Matrix Model. Individuals bring into the small group the resolutions of ego stages through which they have passed as well as the phase specific crisis that they are working on at the present time. For example, in a group of twelve adult members ranging in age from the late twenties to the mid-forties, it can be expected that the ego stages of Intimacy and Generativity will be the psychosocial crises these individuals are confronting. Even though these concerns are the focal ego crises for these members, at the time these individuals join the small group, the nascent social system will effect a retrogradation of these members' ego identity concerns, moving the focus of their concerns to the phase that it is at in its own development. We observe the members struggling with issues of trust vs. mistrust. The retrogradation is not to be understood, in such contexts, as a return to that earlier period of one's life (regression); it is movement on the horizontal plane and not a downward movement, back to that period when the crisis was phase specific. A specific case may illustrate the point being made here. A male member is working through the ego crisis of Generativity which is then identified as being phase specific (VII-7) for him. He finds himself in a social system that is working through issues of trust and mistrust: the first crisis a group confronts in establishing its identity. His involvement in this work, as an active member of the group, also affects him as a person for the experience of being actively involved with the group's struggles of trusting and mistrusting awaken his reflections on how he, personally, relates to issues of trusting and mistrusting. He considers these reflections within the context of his own ego development, thus trust vs. mistrust are experienced within the stage of Generativity (VII-1). That is, the problems involved in trusting vs. mistrusting in the social system will be viewed from the perspective of his current ego stage crisis. As the social system moves from one phase to the next, members will progress horizontally in step with the social system's phase development and toward their current phase specific stage.

Erikson's epigenetic theory serves also to conceptualize the identity formation of the cultural system. The question may again arise as it did with the social system: On what basis can one justify the use of a theory explaining individual development to explain the development of a cultural system? As in the case of the social system we turn again to Erikson's (1959) position on this matter. He posited that the critical phenomenological issues facing a culture are identical in nature – if not in scope – to those phenomenological crises facing an individual. A cultural system is a reflection of human nature while at the same time, the culture is reflected in the individual. There is a transactional relationship through which each is shaped by the other. The cultural system is not something apart from the individuals for they manifest its existence and find their being in it. If the person struggles with the crisis

Robert D. Boyd

of Trust vs. Mistrust then we can expect to find and look to see how the cultural system confronts, defines and resolves the conflict of trusting vs. mistrusting.

The cultural system is carried into the setting of the small group by the members who compose it. It is the members who in portraying their existential culture come to experience it as defined within the context of the small group. In our present society with its mix of publics, it cannot be assumed that a common culture is shared by all group members. Particular values, norms and expectations are frequently held in common among the various subpublics within a given society and it is upon that seemingly reasonable assumption groups work on developing their culture systems. Whether there are common traditions or not the cultural system wills a life of its own. This phenomenon can be observed in groups composed of international negotiators, in managerial groups, community action groups, therapy and learning groups.

The cultural system, like the social system, makes its own demands felt in the life of the group. For example, early in the life of a small group there are attempts on the part of group members to relate their particular group to some larger scheme, program or enterprise outside of the group. This may serve the purpose of helping some members justify their involvement in the group when the group experience in itself fails to provide such meaning, but it can also be observed that the existence of the group perceived as a cultural entity demands its own meaning in the scheme of things. This search for meaning not only gives the individual cause to participate but it also evolves the particular cultural system of the group. Erikson (1959) noted this phenomenon when he described a culture as having an initial problem of establishing cosmic order as opposed to chaos: an observation also made by Neumann (1954) from the perspective of consciousness development. The struggle to establish cosmic order in the cultural system of the small group can be readily observed. This is illustrated in the case of the 'designated' leader who provides no stated structure for the group (invariably experienced as chaos) which awakens in the members not only psychological anxieties but demonic images and powerful feeling-tones. When the cultural system is experienced as being in chaos, while at the same time the social system is working through the phase of trust vs. mistrust, there can be little wonder why some members drop out of the group and why many of those that stay, frequently express puerile frustration and explosive anger.

Similar to both the personality and social system there is a sequence of eight identity phases through which the cultural system may progress. Unlike the ego stage development of an individual, as set out in Erikson's writings, there is no bio-psychosocial clock in the cultural system that propels it onwards to the next phase whether it be ready or

not. The crises are sequential but while one may be focal, evidence of other crises may be observed in the cultural system of the group. The content of these crises parallels those of the personality and social systems: (1) cosmic order, (2) law and order, (3) ideal prototype, (4) technological elements, (5) ideological perspectives, (6) patterns of cooperation and competition, (7) currents of education and tradition, and (8) cultural wisdom. Space does not permit a discussion on each of these crises but in a general way, the sense of each of the phases is identified in their naming.

Emotionality

The conceptual framework set out in a comprehensive collection by Bion (1959) was extended by Thelen (Stock and Thelen, 1958) and his students from Bion's earlier published articles. It was this extended framework which was incorporated into the Matrix Model to explain modes of relating. All three systems must employ ways of relating to other entities and modes of relating within their own system. The selection of Bion's conceptual scheme was made primarily on the basis of its explanatory power. Anyone who has worked with small groups and has even a moderate acceptance of depth psychology cannot fail to appreciate the contribution Bion has made in giving us such clear portraits of the basic emotional states of the group's social system. There was also a personal and a subjective influence in the selection. With the goal of keeping the Matrix Model grounded in depth psychology, I was not about to mix apples and oranges either ontologically or epistemologically. It is difficult enough to understand the dynamics of small groups without superimposing on the project the additional task of resolving conflicting assumptions. It also happens to be the case that depth psychology gives us a more inclusive and integrative picture of the human experience than other current paradigms can offer.

A detailed presentation of Bion's theory of Basic Assumption Cultures is assumed to be unnecessary as it has been so widely discussed in small group literature. We review it here briefly, only to place it operationally within the Matrix Model. The works of Thelen and his students at the University of Chicago may be somewhat less well known and therefore may need a more extensive explanation.

The social system can be observed at different periods in the life of a small group expressing different emotionalities, that is to say, being in different basic assumption cultures. In our work at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, we have observed that the vast majority of groups start out in BaC (Basic assumption Culture) of Dependency, then move on to Fight/Flight and come next to Pairing. We are aware that other investigators report a different sequence (Slater, 1966). I do not see this

theory proposing a strict developmental sequence as was the case with the epigenetic theory; however, because of many factors, for example cultural factors and the symbolism of family, a Dependent BaC seems highly probable as the first emotionality state. Basic assumption cultures may also be cyclical during the life of a small group. This occurs frequently when major transitions are encountered. A social system may move between two BaCs for an extended period of time and during such periods it may never manifest the third type of BaC. These various patterns do not necessarily indicate that the social system remains at the same level of emotionality. Although a BaC of Dependency always has the quality of its basic emotionality, it may become more subtle and convoluted at later stages of a social system's life.

I drew upon the Chicago group (Stock and Thelen, 1958) to conceptualize the emotionality expressions of the personality system within the Matrix Model. Their investigations revealed six types of emotionalities that individuals express in their relationships in small groups. They are: (1) dependency and (2) counterdependency; (3) fight and (4) flight; (5) pairing and (6) counterpairing. Each of these six valencies of emotionality were further delineated into three forms, positive, neutral, and negative, according to the effect they had upon transactions. This schema provides an inclusive and an exhaustive set of categories which make possible careful observations of the modes of relating individual members' use in their relationships.

The cultural system is also active in establishing and maintaining specific modes of relating. As is the case with the social system, the cultural system expresses three forms or types of relating, dependency, pairing, and fight/flight. The type of emotionality that the cultural system manifests initially is determined by the larger cultural milieu in which the small group has its context. For example, the cultural system of a group of college students meeting with their professor would be generally structured on the emotionality of Dependency. The norms, expectations and rituals would express this relationship mode. Small groups form their cultural emotionalities based on the fundamental prototype to which the members see the group belonging. In education there is clearly a dependency on the teacher as a guide, a resource person, a helper, and in some situations as a beneficent or a castigating sovereign. All small groups are drawn from or are directly responsive to a larger cultural body which could be a specific public, institution, movement, organization, or corporation. Both Freud (1922) and Bion (1959) discussed the basic emotional states of the Army and the Church and Bion specifically related these to the basic assumption cultures. He did not, as I have done here, differentiate between the social and cultural systems, clearly because he did not hold such a structural view of the small group. This point may be more fully understood in the case of the

Army which may be used to illustrate the emotionality states of both the cultural and social systems as viewed from the Matrix Model. The Army, as both Freud and Bion recognized, is founded on the cultural prototype of Fight/Flight, but it functions most effectively and efficiently at the platoon level when, as a social system, it employs the BaC of Pairing. The recognition of the cultural system's and the social system's emotional states explains why observers are aware of two co-existing emotionalities in the life of a small group. It is of some interest to note that Bion was also aware of the existence of underlying emotional states in the group and described this phenomenon as proto-mental states of emotionality. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to examine his interpretation against the explanation set out here. It is apparent that the context in which the small group has its existence must be taken into account in some functional manner as the need to do so is pointed out in the above discussion.

The following account of a segment in the life of a small group will illustrate the ways in which the three systems express modes of relating.

A psychiatric team has been examining, with the help of an outside consultant, the manner in which it has been operating as a team. The third meeting began in much the same manner as the previous two sessions with no clearly stated agenda but with the sense that the group was waiting for the consultant to take a leadership role for the group. He had informed them that he would provide whatever insights he believed would be helpful to the group but that the work of resolving issues was up to everyone and that he could not provide solutions to the problems the team was encountering. These points had been made on more than one occasion during the group's sessions; however, there was a clearly observable sense in the group that it was waiting for the leader to offer ready-made solutions to its difficulties. A few minutes into the third session, John, one of the two male psychiatrists, spoke up. 'We're getting nowhere fast. Perhaps we will have to face up to the fact that there is a hierarchy of responsibility and this in turn dictates the structural nature of our organization as a team.' Mary, the head nurse, immediately confronted him. 'Perhaps that's what you have always wanted.' 'Nonsense, I feel all the wasted affect in our relations comes about because there is no agreed upon structure.' Mary: 'What you mean is an organization based on status.' John looked down at his folded hands and did not reply. A period of silence followed. A psychiatric social worker spoke next in what appeared as an intentionally quiet voice. Janet: 'We came together because we all are committed to improving what we are doing.' Another period of silence. Janet added, 'As we agreed, when we started, the delivery of good care is what is before us.' Mary turned to Janet, 'That's right but we're not going to get there unless we can be honest with each other.' John: 'And I am not being

honest?' Mary: 'It's not a case of you being honest but whether we are honest with each other.' John: 'That doesn't make sense.' Before Mary could answer, Anne, a staff nurse, spoke up.

I am beginning to feel very uncomfortable and I really don't understand where we are going. And I also agree with Janet that we came together to work together, to share with each other and to be a better team by finding ways we can support each other. For three sessions now we haven't done that. We just seem to get together to express our frustrations.

Henry, the psychiatric resident, appearing to agree with Anne added, 'It appears that we have one set of stated norms but another set which we really operate on.' The leader then raised the observation, 'Perhaps the rules the family has given itself are preventing the family from dealing with itself as a family in the here and now.'

The social system is expressing the BaC of Fight/Flight. This is evident in this brief account of the group in the sense that there is some basic matter that is working against the resolution of the team's problems, thus in Bion's terms 'appearing as an enemy to the group'. But the group is not organized against it and thus finds itself in Flight. When we examine the small group from the point of view of the personality system, three valencies can be identified. John and Mary are relating to the situation on the valency of Fight. Janet is attempting to express the valency of Pairing, while Anne is employing the emotionality of Dependency. The emotionality modality of this group's culture is Dependency. The sense of this culture is reflected in symbolic meanings manifest in the statement made by John, Mary and Anne. This finding is not unexpected in that, for this team, the larger context is a hospital setting which is generally structured as a hierarchical culture, where status and authority are institutionalized.

This brief outline of emotionality as manifested by the three systems provides only the barest of introductions to these dynamic forces in the life of a small group. It is critical in terms of what is proposed here to remember that all three systems are expressing modes of relating simultaneously, otherwise we may fail to perceive certain critical dynamics which are shaping and directing the life of the group.

Reality-adaptive

The third primary task I have identified as the reality-adaptive task. Such a label is in immediate need of being defined for as it stands it may mean a number of different things to a variety of people. To carry through with the conceptual premisses that I have adopted places immediate boundaries on the possible meanings of the reality-adaptive

task. It is defined within the framework of depth psychology – specifically, analytical psychology. Its content is examined at the symbolic level. As is the case with the other primary tasks, the developmental, transactional, and Gestalt points of view describe the functional perspectives of the reality-adaptive task.

The realization of this primary task evolved over many years of working with small groups and attempting to explain what I was observing. Initially I formulated my observations in terms of problem-solving behaviors. The group defines the problem before it, differentiates what is involved and works through the structuring of a solution to the problem. This approach is widely used in the study of small groups in education, commerce, and academic psychology. This approach puts the reality-adaptive task off by itself as it fails to directly relate it to the affect in the group and also to the group's task of defining its boundaries (identity). Bion's (1959) concept of work, which I then adopted, had a distinct virtue over the problem-solving framework in that it related work and affect (emotionality). His notion of work was very limited because it was a binary concept – there was a sophisticated group or there wasn't. The Chicago group (Stock and Thelen, 1958) delineated work into four subcategories. This step did provide a more detailed observation of the group as it works on the reality-adaptive task and it was one we made use of in our research at Wisconsin. It also had the conceptual integrity by keeping the category systems within one theoretical framework. The four categories of work were helpful in understanding certain aspects of the group's life but they did not account for other phenomena within the group which I experienced but could not explicitly describe. After many months of observing video tapes and finding no acceptable resolution to my dilemma I turned to my library for whatever help I might be able to find. A rereading of Slater (1966) alerted me to a reference on the works of Erich Neumann (1954), whose research Slater did not however incorporate into his own work, probably because of his psychoanalytic leanings. I found and read Neumann's *The origins and history of consciousness*. Doors flew open and for the next year I immersed myself in the reading of Jung and analytical psychology. What I had experienced both as a member and as an observer of a small group, but had not been able to express, now slowly yet distinctly became clear to me. The reality-adaptive task is the expansion of consciousness.

The theory of the development of consciousness can be used to explain what each system faces in dealing with its unique encounters with the sphere of experience that I have here called reality demands. We will begin by first observing the social system.

In the initial meeting of a small group, the social system is experienced as an evolving entity. Some members immediately strike out

at this situation that they sense, asserting their individuality in one of a number of ways. Their fear, explicitly conscious or not, is that they will be swallowed up by this entity; that their unique individuality will be denied to them in this situation. This phenomenon occurs in a range of groups we have observed and we therefore assume it is common to all small groups. It is the initial phase of the social system as it comes into existence when viewed from the reality-adaptive perspective. Here it is in the Uroboric stage of consciousness development, the Great Round, as Neumann describes it, a most apt description for this initial phase of the social system. To most members, the group is experienced as a circle that contains and defines. It is this sense of the group which arouses anxiety in some members and a primary feeling of security in other members. It is the first reality-adaptive task encountered by the social system and one that it must work through to move on to the next phase in the expansion of consciousness.

When the group moves out of the Uroboric phase, it is then experienced as the Great Mother. Such polarities as caring and abandoning, feeding and devouring, nurturing, and denying are manifest in the group as it struggles to find its way. These are the symbolic content expressed in the life of the social system and reflected in the behaviors of members as they relate to the social system. A variety of statements made by members give witness to this fact. 'I feel that we have come to be a caring group.' 'Initially I was uncertain that this group could hear what I was needing, now I feel relaxed about that.' 'I feel as if this group, and I don't mean any one member, could leave you out there to dangle in the wind, if you didn't agree to do a certain thing the group wanted.' There is an overwhelming impression that the group at this phase has taken on the image of the Great Mother when viewed from the perspective of analytical psychology. In a later chapter, the Great Mother as an image of the social system is discussed in detail.

There are three phases of the Great Mother, the Uroboric Great Mother, the presence of and the encounter with the Good and Bad Mother, and the resolution that leads to the dominance of either the Good or Bad Mother. Although a general pattern of progression can be observed to these phases, it can also be observed that often there is a back and forth movement to these phases. Finally there will be a resolution that establishes the group as being either predominately a Good or Bad Mother. The dominance of the Bad Mother results in the stagnation of the group, while the ascendancy of the Good Mother leads to a forward movement of the group. Moving out of that resolution the group encounters the separation of the Great Parents. The Great Father then joins the Great Mother and becomes the principal element of the social system and thus the critical content of the reality-adaptive task. The group then confronts the Good and Bad Father and again must

resolve the choice between them. If the Bad Father comes to characterize the social system, the group stagnates and often regresses. The Good Father is the phase in the life of the group that leads to the subsequent phase of the hero journey – the developmental phase described as interdependency (Bennis and Shepard, 1956), the New Order (Slater, 1966), and the Transformation Myth (Neumann, 1954).

The individual adult member of the group struggles with the stages of consciousness development as he/she experiences them in the social system of the group. It is generally the case that members are aware of some struggle going on but would not be aware of it in the terms in which we have described it above. For those members who are aware and accept the concept of the unconscious, its meaning is frequently restricted to repressed material. Few have a knowledge of the concept as set out in analytical psychology. Whether there is a conscious awareness or not, all members are confronted with the archetypal content of the social system as it evolves through phases of consciousness development. As illustrated above (Uroboric phase) some members feel threatened by the group because it may swallow them up and destroy their individuality. In the phase of the Great Mother some members speak of relationships with their personal mothers as this helps them to understand some of the feeling which they are experiencing in the group. Later their struggles with autonomy – with the Great Father – are projected onto the leader's behaviors. It is apparent in observing the members that they are revisiting and not infrequently restructuring aspects of their consciousness development. To the extent that members commit themselves to the welfare of the group, and are willing and able to examine their own psychic development, is the ground prepared for personal transformations.

Neumann (1954) documented the stages of consciousness development in human cultures. His studies uncovered a pattern of development outlined above in the discussion of the social system. Thus every society can be examined to determine which stage the culture is at in its development. This information is critical to an understanding of what is taking place in a small group. The culture of the society within which the small group exists is brought into the group by the members and is experienced as a dynamic force within the matrix of the group. Major aspects of the content which compose the developmental stage are the directive forces in the society's collective consciousness. These several points may be illustrated in the following observation.

An advance seminar of graduate students in a Midwest university has been formed to examine the criminal justice system in United States. The ten men and women, who are unknown to each other, are meeting for the first session. The professor after a few words that sketch the broad issues, asks the members to view the group as a learning

community in which everyone should feel equally responsible for the direction of their enquiry. There is a sense in observing the group that the individuals have been thrust into a type of social system to which they have little familiarity. Out of an initial feeling of chaos the image of the Uroboric arises. Concurrently, other dynamics are observable. The group struggles to identify and define an agenda but with the professor remaining quiet during this period, they appear unable to make any decision. It appears the class members are waiting for the professor to give them guidance. The members have brought into the cultural system of the small group the cultural dynamics of the educational institution and also of the larger society for both share in the predominant archetype – the stage of the Great Father. Both the institution and the American society manifest the patriarchal culture. The social and cultural systems of this small group are out of phase with each other and it is this situation, so often observed in small groups of various types, that is one of the major conditions which produces miscommunications and misunderstandings in these early sessions. The group is encountering the Great Mother in the social system while it is trying to conform to the Great Father in the cultural system. In such groups where the designated leader does not step in and confirm the Great Father and define the Great Mother, it can be expected that turmoil as well as the opportunities for personal transformations will be present. To realize these opportunities the patriarchy must be put aside and the matriarchy allowed to be expressed in the cultural matrix of the group and experienced by the members.

The cultural system's stages of development parallel those of the other two systems, but, as has been illustrated above, the sequence may be out of phase in the initial sessions of a small group.

A concluding statement

The small group is viewed here as an entity-in-process. The points of view which constitute the Matrix Model are the places where one may stand in order to gain some understanding of this entity-in-process, a phenomenon that we speak of as the small group. There are different levels upon which these perspectives can be structured. Here theories from depth psychology have been chosen as the framework for these perspectives. The firm ground upon which any structure is built must be the meaning of the experience as lived. This is the tenet of our empirical research. The validity and integrity of the Matrix Model in turn rests upon empirical enquiries.

Empirical studies in the social sciences require the development of data-gathering empirical procedures. These are the methodologies by which we explore and test our hunches and conjectures. Social sciences

are dependent upon methodologies in the same way that the physical sciences of physics and astronomy are dependent upon the invention of instruments. Methodologies in the social sciences are analogous to the instruments the physical scientists use in their research. Our purpose was to subject our theories to empirical tests. Therefore the task before us became one of developing appropriate methodologies by which to subject our theories to empirical tests. The chapter which follows reports on a methodology which examines one dimension of the Matrix Model – the social system in the reality-adaptive domain.

The methodology allows us to examine the five points of view set forth in the Matrix Model in combination with the theory of the development of consciousness as described in the works of Erich Neumann. The Matrix Model provides a dynamic and structural framework for the methodology. Neumann's theory defines the content for the observational categories of consciousness. As will be shown in the following chapter, the combination of the two frameworks was the basis for the development of empirical procedures. This methodology provided the way to study the development of consciousness in small groups and to test our conjectures concerning these developments.

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Methodology for the study of the development of consciousness in the small group

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The Matrix Model described in the previous chapter provides ways to conceptualize the dynamics of small groups. This chapter reports on a methodology that has moved our work from a conceptual to an empirical level. Specifically, the purpose of this chapter is to present a systematic methodology for studying the process by which small interactive groups evolve from a condition of near fusion of the members to one in which individuality is more freely manifested and expressed. This process is viewed from the perspective of Erich Neumann's (1954) theory of the evolution of consciousness, as he described it within the context of a cultural system, and Boyd's (1983, 1984) Matrix Model of the small group. This methodology focuses on the social system of the small group and how the group-as-a-whole develops an increasingly sophisticated and differentiated process for meeting reality demands. Distinct mythological motifs or archetypal themes, attributed to the social system manifest the process of an emerging and identifiable character of the social system.

The chapter is presented in four sections: (1) The rationale for studying the small group from the perspective of analytical psychology; (2) The theoretical basis for the framework presented in this chapter; (3) A description of the categories used to identify the manifestation of archetypal themes in group interaction; and (4) A description of the procedures used to identify archetypal motifs in group interaction.

The small group from the perspective of analytical psychology

Analytical psychologists have generally avoided theoretical or clinical application of the principles of analytical psychology to social contexts, such as families and interpersonal or small group behaviors. Empirical studies which make use of this conceptual framework have been based for the most part on the clinical experiences of therapists with individual patients, with a focus primarily on psychic phenomena as they occur in the individual personality. Much of this research is

devoted to developing or advancing the theoretical basis for psychotherapy founded on the postulates of analytical psychology.

The predominant focus on the psychological implications of Jung's work is a curious characteristic of the field, given the profound social foundations of this school of thought. As Progoff (1973) has clearly demonstrated, Jung's interpretation of the psyche is based on a social conception of the human being. Individuality, rather than a given in our lives, is actually derived from a more fundamental notion of society. The relationship of the individual to the group is also inherent in Jung's notion of the unconscious (Fordham, 1957). For Jung, 'the social is essentially the unconscious, and, more particularly, the deeper layers of the Collective Unconscious' (Progoff, 1973, p. 143). From the social, or the unconscious, the individual emerges through the processes of differentiation and individuation. Bound up with the process of individuation is the problem of how the social sources of individuality relate or contribute to the enlargement of personality. The processes of psychological development and individuation involve processes of objective relationships and careful consideration of transference relationships. Thus, at the core of Jung's social thought is the issue of the emergence of personality from society.

Given the social nature of the human being inherent in Jung's thinking, it follows that individuation does not occur independent of or isolated from social relationships. It is a process that goes on, whether we know it or not, within the social contexts of our natural, everyday lives (Jung, 1968). Individuation is intimately bound up within these relationships and inseparable from them. Social contexts often serve to precipitate or mediate the crises of the individuation process. As Ulanov (1971) stated, 'Individuation is not a private affair but is indissolubly bound up with the relation to a partner and to society' (p. 273). The relatedness of one's self to another represents yet another of the polarities that are so critical to the individuation process. Thus, in attempting to further understand the individuation process within the context of the individual in society, it is necessary to examine how social relationships contribute to the individuation process. What we need are analytical tools that will help us better understand how these intrapsychic phenomena relate to a larger social setting. The concepts, theories, and ideas of analytical psychology provide a valuable framework which may be used to further this aim.

The small group, in the form of work groups, social groups, learning groups and families, represents a very common context for social relationships in all cultures. Unlike the one-on-one or group analytic session, these groups represent potential contexts for natural, everyday transformations of personality (Jung, 1968). Several characteristics of the small group contribute to the strong social relationships that form

among the members. The relationships that do form are sustained over time, usually for at least several weeks or more. During this period, members will often develop a deep sense of commitment to these relationships and to the overall goals of the group. As a result of the sustained nature of the members' involvement and commitment, these groups often develop a relatively high level of intimacy and trust among the members. Thus, a climate evolves in the group in which members are more willing, if they so choose, to engage in the personal examination and exploration necessary for individuation. Approached with the correct conscious attitude, the relationships formed in the context of the small group provide a potent source for natural transformations.

We have no reason to believe that all or even most small, interactive groups develop to this level of maturity. Yet the nature of the small group at least provides the necessary conditions for this to take place. Groups that do develop high levels of trust and intimacy allow for expression and examination of projections and identifications. Acting out is frequently observed and members manifesting such behavior receive feedback, as well as guidance and insight, from fellow group members. Members also have the opportunity to try out and test new conscious attitudes within a safe and supportive environment. Thus, small group participation provides individuals with the opportunity to work on processes of individuation who otherwise would not choose analytic or other explicit experiences to further their psychological development.

The potential contribution that participation in small groups makes to individuation, however, has been viewed by many analytical psychologists with considerable skepticism (Illing, 1957; Jung, 1968; Meier, 1948). To summarize the argument, the group promotes a state of collective uniformity with a consequent loss of individual responsibility and uniqueness. Undesirable regression is promoted and maintained within the group contexts, contributing to a false sense of security among the members. An increased suggestibility among the members often leads to conformism to the leader's direction and to dominant group ideas. Finally, ego defenses decrease in the context of a group, resulting in uncontrollable invasion of consciousness by unconscious material. Jung's basic position toward groups, reflected in this argument is that the individuals need to free themselves from the bondage and domination imposed by the group.

There is reason, however, to question the applicability of these objections to a serious study of how the small group contributes to individuation. The argument assumes that groups share many of the characteristics of a mob, crowd, or a mass of people. This is reflected in the kinds of examples that Jung used to illustrate his point, with references to 'gatherings' of people well beyond what most small group

researchers would consider a 'small group'. In these examples, there seems little consideration for face-to-face interaction and for group meetings extended over a period of time. Jung's objections also reflect a practical concern with how to best further the individuation process within the context of an analytic experience, rather than a concern for furthering a depth understanding of the individual-group relationship, and the conditions within this relationship that either impede or facilitate individuation.

Many analytical psychologists have assumed Jung's position with respect to the small group and have accepted, rather uncritically, the premiss that the group remains an undifferentiated mass. Yet, as Hobson (1964) suggests, it is inappropriate to assume that this assertion applies categorically to all groups. Numerous empirical studies which have examined developmental processes in small groups have demonstrated that the small, interactive group moves through systematic and orderly phases of development (Bradford, 1978; Slater, 1966), a kind of life cycle (Lacoursiere, 1980) unique to the small group. A key characteristic of this development is a process of differentiation within the group and among the members. As the small, interactive group develops, it demonstrates movement away from uniformity and unanimity and toward the establishment of individual standards and values. In effect, the small group reflects a microcosm of the individual-society relationship, in which one observes the gradual differentiation and emergence from the society represented by the group-as-a-whole.

A growing body of empirical evidence also supports the potential contribution that the small group can make to individuation. Champenowne and Lewis (1966) have shown that participation in group therapy results, for some members, in an increased sense of personal responsibility, an acceptance of one's self and one's limitations, and an opening up to the presence of archetypes in one's life. In maintaining contact with an outer reality, represented by the small group, unconscious activity is promoted, which then allows individuals to become increasingly aware of its influence in their lives. For example, Champenowne and Lewis observed that patients were often better able to face their shadows after witnessing their own conflicts acted out by others in the group. These findings are illustrative of the attributes which also characterize an active process of individuation.

Whitmont (1964) also provided evidence for the positive contribution that the therapeutic group can make to the individuation process. In his research, Whitmont found group settings helpful in providing a basis for the reality testing of relationships. This work often resulted in more accurate and realistic perceptions of the significant relationships established within the group context. Whitmont also demonstrated that analytic scrutiny of the 'group archetype' lead to a working out of the

group transference as well. Both the reality testing of relationships and the working through of group transferences furthered the aims of group therapy and processes of individuation.

Greene (1985) also identified ways in which the therapeutic group contributes to individuation. According to Greene, the group context constellates archetypes inherent in the family relationships, but which are difficult to manifest in the therapeutic dyad. This provides group members with an opportunity to identify and work on these archetypal influences which they otherwise might not readily confront. In addition, Greene argues, the group provides a supportive, psychic environment for the working through of transference relationships with the leader.

Jones (1983) identified and interviewed several analytical psychologists who regularly utilized group therapy in their analytic practice. One of the issues of central concern in her study was the extent to which group work resulted in what she referred to as 'intrapersonal learning', a term which appears to be quite similar in its operational definition to what is meant by processes of individuation. The analytical psychologists included in the study sample reported that group participation resulted in considerable intrapersonal learning for their patients, thus contributing to individuation within their individual lives.

To summarize, there is both theoretical and empirical support for the assertion that small group participation has the potential for facilitating processes of individuation, despite a pervasive reluctance among many analytical psychologists to seriously consider such a thesis. Their objections appear to assume that the small, interactive group remains an undifferentiated mass which induces dangerous regression and conformism over its members. There is little question that, if not facilitated properly, the small group can and does manifest these highly undesirable features, characteristics more appropriately attributed to a crowd or a mob. As we have seen, however, when facilitated by skilled leaders, the small, interactive group can and often does work through these constraining, potentially destructive influences. The result is a social context which enhances the potential for natural transformations to occur among the members. Given the pervasiveness as well as the potential of the small, interactive group for contributing to natural transformations, it behooves us to better understand the underlying dynamics of these groups and the way these dynamics either facilitate or impede the process of individuation among their members.

Theoretical framework

Before describing the specific categories and the procedures used to identify archetypal themes in a small, interactive group, it is necessary to first briefly describe the theoretical framework upon which the

methodology is based. The components of this framework include Neumann's (1954) theory of the archetypal development of consciousness, the Matrix Model of the small group (Boyd, 1983, 1984), and notion of archetypal theme (Dirkx, 1987).

Individuation represents the process by which enlargement of consciousness occurs. Thus, in initiating a research program to study the social context of the small group as a milieu for facilitating natural transformations, it seems only logical to utilize a theoretical framework which conceptualizes small group behavior from the perspective of consciousness. Erich Neumann's (1954) theory of the cultural evolution of consciousness is ideally suited for this purpose for several reasons. Neumann focused his research on cultural manifestations of consciousness and how these expressions of consciousness change over time. It is, therefore, a framework from which to view consciousness within a given collective, rather than just an individual expression of consciousness. Neumann's theory also provides a theoretical basis for relating consciousness to deeper, more unconscious levels of a given culture. As we have seen, this relationship of consciousness to the unconscious is at the heart of the process of individuation. Neumann focused on mythological motifs as manifestations of the underlying structural relationship of consciousness to the unconscious. He identified a number of archetypes which appear to be the primordial foundations for these motifs. According to Neumann, these archetypes tend to be manifest in a stage-like fashion as consciousness evolves within a culture, with each subsequent stage reflecting an increasingly differentiated relationship of consciousness to the unconscious. Furthermore, the motifs attributed to the evolution of consciousness within cultures appear to characterize individual development as well (Neumann, 1954; Whitmont, 1982). Because of its applicability to both the cultural system and the individual, Neumann's theory provides an excellent framework from which to study the relationship of the individual to the group as this relationship evolves over time.

The methodology also makes use of the concept of the group-as-a-whole. Within the context of Boyd's (1983, 1984) Matrix Model, the small group can be viewed from three structural points of view: the personality system, the social system, and the cultural system. The group-as-a-whole is reflected in the notions of the social and cultural systems. Thus, the group is viewed as if it were an entity in and of itself. As such, the group has certain attributes, structures, or characteristics which are not simply the sum of individual structures and dynamics. Issues which involve the social and cultural systems are manifest in the behaviors of individual members but these behaviors tend to reflect patterns or relationships that are simply not seen if one watches individuals instead of the group-as-a-whole. According to this model, the

cultural system of the group represents the beliefs, values, rules, and traditions that come to define roles and expectations within the life of the group. The social system is confronted with the task of developing effective means of adapting to the demand of reality. Neumann (1954) has clearly demonstrated that a culture's level or stage of consciousness mediates this process of reality adaptation.

Thus, it seems reasonable that the stage-like appearance of mythological motifs documented in individual and cultural development may also occur within the cultural system of the small, interactive group as well. Although Neumann (1954) and Whitmont (1982) alluded to this possibility, neither scholar systematically developed the idea further. In our group dynamics laboratory, we have begun to develop a systematic process for studying these phenomena in small groups. Preliminary studies have demonstrated motifs similar to those described by Neumann, including the Uroborus, the Great Mother, Separation of World Parents, and the Great Father (Dirkx, 1987). Slater's (1966) empirical study of training groups also provides evidence of the presence of these motifs in the small group context.

In this methodology, we utilize the term 'archetypal themes' instead of mythological motifs. Although the terms are intended to be synonymous, we have found the idea of themes to be somewhat less obscure than motifs when training judges to use the observational system. Archetypal themes share characteristics with other forms of themes that have been reported to occur in small, interactive groups, such as fantasy or utopian themes (Gibbard and Hartman, 1973; Slater, 1966). These themes tend to reflect group-wide concerns that transcend any one member of the group. They also tend to convey deep, emotional concerns underlying group interaction. Fantasy and utopian themes, however, may not always be latent. Indeed, members are often aware at some level that they are using these themes. In addition, fantasy or utopian themes are often based on the personal unconscious of the group members and do not truly reflect a collective theme.

Archetypal themes, on the other hand, are intended to refer to the overt manifestation of specific archetypes within the context of the small group. The themes reflect poorly or incompletely articulated beliefs or assumptions that the social system seems to be acting on. Group members are usually unaware of their manifestation. The archetypal themes represent specific concerns of the collective unconscious of the social system. The different themes which emerge in the group suggest changing structural relationships between consciousness and the collective unconscious. It is in this sense that the archetypal theme is similar to the idea of mythological motif as described by Neumann (1954) and others for the evolution of consciousness in cultures.

Descriptions of the archetypal themes

In the previous section, we indicated that a number of researchers have reported the manifestation, within small group interaction, of certain mythological motifs that closely resemble those described by Neumann (1954). Most of these reports, however, have been based on clinical observations made within the context of a therapeutic setting. Only a handful of these observations were made within learning or training groups. In addition, there has been little attempt to set forth and test conjectures that seek to explain how these motifs relate to each other over the life of a group or what they mean to the group's growth and development.

Our aim in developing this methodology was to provide a systematic basis by which researchers could reliably and validly identify the presence of mythological motifs in the ongoing interaction of a small group. With the framework and the procedures discussed in this section, it is possible to meaningfully test a series of conjectures related to archetypal phenomena in small groups. Such a research program will help us better understand the underlying processes through which groups evolve into highly differentiated entities and how, in the process, conditions are created which provide members with the potential opportunities for personal transformation. The methodology makes use of the 'category system' of observational research (Evertson and Green, 1986), with each of the categories representing a particular archetypal theme. Judges are trained to systematically observe group interaction using these categories and to identify archetypal themes as they occur within the group-as-a-whole. In this section, we will briefly discuss the development of the categories used in this methodology. Then, general descriptions of each of the archetypal themes will be provided (a more complete description of the observation schedule is available from the authors upon request).

Development of the categories

A total of twelve categories, listed in Table 2.1 comprises the observation schedule. Each of the categories in this schedule represents a mythological motif or archetypal theme that may be manifest within the group-as-a-whole. The specific themes included in the schedule were derived from a careful study of the theory of archetypal development of consciousness as described by Neumann (1954). The rationale for selecting Neumann's theory was discussed in the previous section. In his theory, Neumann identified eight archetypal stages which he believes evolve in a stage-like manner. According to Neumann, it is this stage-like succession that determines consciousness development both within cultures and individual lives.

In order to account for previous observations of archetypal themes that we have made in small learning groups, it was necessary to reconceptualize Neumann's eight stages in limited and specific ways. This reconceptualization focuses primarily on Neumann's three central myths: the Great Mother, the Great Father, and the Hero, all three of which have been observed to occur in small, interactive groups.

Table 2.1 Categories comprising the observation schedule for archetypal themes

1.	Uroborus
2.	Awareness of the Great Mother
3.	Separation of the World Parents
4.	Separation of the Good Mother and the Bad Mother
5.	Struggle with the Great Mother
6.	Fixation with the Bad Mother
7.	Resolution of the Great Mother
8.	Separation of the Good Father and the Bad Father
9.	Struggle with the Great Father
10.	Fixation with the Bad Father
11.	Resolution of the Great Father
12.	Journey of the Hero

Neumann's stage of the Great Mother was identified as having two themes – awareness of the Great Mother (category 2) and Separation of the Good and Bad Mother (category 4). Neumann's stage of the Birth of the Hero was re-labeled as the Struggle with the Great Mother. The stage of the Slaying of the Great Mother is referred to in our methodology as the theme of the Resolution of the Great Mother. There are occasions when the struggle with the Great Mother either does not materialize fully or it ends in a state of non-resolution, which we have labeled Fixation with the Bad Mother (category 6).

With respect to Neumann's description of the Great Father, again our observations lead to a further refinement of his schema. There is indeed work in the group which indicates the existence of the symbol of the Great Father in the social system. Our observations lead us to conclude that this archetype is quickly defined by two themes – the Good Father and the Bad Father. Accordingly we have added the theme of the separation of the Good Father and the Bad Father (category 8). In addition we have re-conceptualized Neumann's stage of the Slaying of the Great Father into three separate themes – Struggle with the Great Father, Fixation with the Bad Father, and Resolution of the Great Father.

Finally we have collapsed his last two stages – the Captive and Treasure, and Transformation – into a single theme, the Journey of the Hero (category 12). Once a group has successfully resolved its struggle

with the Great Mother and Great Father, it is at a point in its development where the feminine and masculine principles can be equally accessed and brought to bear on reality-adaptive tasks. This work of the group is what is meant by the Journey of the Hero.

These modifications of Neumann's eight stages do not reflect a substantive alteration of his theory. Each of the themes that were added to the observation schedule are, in fact, explicitly recognized and described by Neumann. Although Neumann does not specifically label these themes as stages, his description differentiates these themes as separate issues in the development of consciousness. Thus, the twelve archetypal themes reflect separate ideas that can be readily identified in his work. An additional general category specifies the absence of evidence for archetypal themes. Judges were instructed to use this category when they found no evidence of archetypal themes in a given coding unit.

Each of the archetypal themes was defined by a set of descriptors or specifications. These specifications were derived explicitly from Neumann's descriptions of the archetypal stages. Each of the stages discussed in *The origins and history of consciousness* were examined carefully for specifications that could be used to define the stage. A list of these specifications was then compiled for each stage. Specifications containing references to archaic images found to be inappropriate to groups or making references to individuals rather than groups were reworded so that they reflected an orientation only to the social system. Care was taken in the rewording of specifications not to alter the original meaning of the specification as presented in Neumann's work. Most specifications that we had identified in Neumann's work were readily observable. Specifications which required either an unacceptable level of inference, or were not observable because of archaic images, were deleted.

After the twelve sets of specifications had been developed, they were cast against our extensive observations of and experiences with small groups. This step was taken for two reasons: first, we needed to be certain that the wording and the images used in the specifications related meaningfully to the dynamics observed in small groups; second, it was necessary to determine that the specifications used to describe the themes were observable in the dynamics of the social system. Wording and images that we found not to be meaningful were either reworked or deleted.

The identification of specific archetypal themes consists of two major judgements. First, judges need to determine if archetypal influence is even present to any significant degree in group interaction. Observation continues until such a determination is made. When judges determine that archetypal influence is indeed present, then the observation

schedule is used to determine which of the twelve archetypal themes contained in the schedule is being manifest at that period in time. General specifications were developed to assist judges in determining if archetypal influence is present at a given period of time in the group. In developing these specifications, we relied on the phrase 'a sense of'. This phrase indicates an intuitive impression of what is happening in the social system of the group at the time the observation is being made. It is a phrase that has been successfully used by other investigators of group-wide phenomena as well (Bion, 1959). In addition to specific, overt behaviors, judgements are based on intuitive impressions as well.

In the remainder of this section, we will briefly describe the specifications used to determine if archetypal influence is present as well as those used to make determinations of specific archetypal themes.

Indications of archetypal influences

Archetypal influence is indicated in group interaction when there is a clear sense of the group acting as a collective entity. The group appears to be caught in the grip of something that it cannot consciously control, as if completely possessed by an issue, argument, fear, or image. Observations of behaviors appear to be characteristic or extensions of the social system rather than of one or two individuals.

Relatively high levels of emotionality within the social system also suggest archetypal influence. This emotionality may occur within the context of a relatively task-oriented process or it may be manifest in a situation where the group appears completely caught up in an emotional concern or problem. It is important to point out that the observed emotionality must be attributed to the social system and not to individuals within the group.

Another indication of archetypal influences is the symbolic use by the social system of language, ideas, or concepts. For example, discussion surrounding the role the leader is taking, as described by the members, may leave one with the sense that the group is really focusing on an examination of issues related to patriarchy. Groups under the influence of an archetype may also appear to be 'free associating'. That is, discussion seems to be random and directionless, with no clear, logical development of ideas or thought. Magical or wishful thinking may be manifest during these situations, such as planning for a re-union after the groups ends, or speculations about the group's role in a grand experiment being conducted by the leader.

If judges, using these general indications of archetypal influence, conclude that archetypal phenomena are present, then they must decide what specific themes are represented in the group interaction. In the material that follows, each of twelve archetypal themes comprising the observation schedule is briefly described.

The Uroboric theme

In the Uroboric phase, the social system is characterized by an almost complete state of nondifferentiation and wholeness, contained in some manner as if it were in an unbroken roundness. Little, if any, distinction is made among group members. Even the leader is poorly differentiated from the social system, if at all. Belonging to the group is the predominant ethos and serves to minimize important distinctions such as gender. Differences in opinion among members are either minimized or ignored and relevancy of comments and agendas and opposing points of view are not recognized. A sense of helplessness characterizes the group, as if it is not capable of doing much of anything on its own. The group, however, has not come to an awareness yet of this sense of helplessness.

Awareness of the Great Mother

This phase is characterized by a budding sense of differentiation. Nonetheless there continues to be relatively little awareness of distinctions in the group, and no discomfort or serious disagreement regarding distinctions that are apparent. Differentiation of aspects of the outer world is usually obtained through the use of magical and mythical thinking. For example, the notion may be expressed that the group is special and unique, one that has never existed before. Members seem to be symbolically expressing a concern for relatedness and for being nurtured or mothered. They may initially look to the leader for this mothering, but, if the leader is nondirective or fails to provide a sense of nurturing, the group will be frustrated with this unmet need. The members will then look to the group as a source of mothering, illustrated by increasing use of the terms 'we' or 'the group'. The members remain bound together in an unarticulated way as a method of warding off their unconscious fears of being swallowed by or fused with the group. A sense of fear and impotence may be present, but these feelings are poorly focused and have no direct object. Expressions of fear of abandonment or of being stranded may also be voiced at this time. Images which frequently arise during this phase include references to food and to eating, water and a sense of the group swimming. For the most part, the social system seems to be acting impulsively and instinctually.

Separation of the World Parents

There is a sense that the group is aware, at least symbolically, of the presence of both Mother and Father in the group. This may be reflected in references to issues of relatedness (how members will relate to each other), and power and leadership (reflected in concerns over structure and agenda). Beginning to surface is an expectation that the group will

develop independence and autonomy. However, this hope and expectation remains shaky and shrouded in doubt. The group seems to flip back and forth between work and emotionality, conscious deliberation and instinctual response, issues of leadership and issues of relatedness. The increasing call for or use of rituals, norms, and patterns suggests that the group is beginning to get boundaries.

Separation of the Good Mother and Bad Mother

This theme reflects the group's awareness that the social system, symbolized as a mother, has a terrible side as well as a good side: that the group can destroy as well as nurture. The group may be alternately viewed as something evil – smothering and constraining – and as something good – representing fullness, abundance, and a source of life and energy. As a result of this awareness, anxiety and tension in the group are increased. There is a sense of pain, suffering, and loss in the group, as well as an awareness of how good it feels to come together. In its attempt to define its nature, the social system seems to be symbolically weighing its goodness and badness. Swings may be observed, from being overly self-critical and self-effacing to being self-congratulatory and having an inflated view of the group. The sense that 'we're all in this together' seems to be breaking down. The major question that is representative of this theme is the form that relatedness will take in the group.

Struggle with the Great Mother

The key question reflected in this theme is whether the group will be a place in which people will relate in a domineering and overpowering way, or one in which relatedness tends to be nurturing and loving. These polar positions created ambivalence within the social system and this theme shows the group's struggles with this ambivalence. Members demonstrate an awareness that the group has both a good, nurturing side and a bad, destructive side, and they seem to be intent on establishing the essential goodness of the group. This activity does not occur without a sense of fear or regret. This will often manifest itself in open conflict which centers around issues of relatedness. A pro and con is evident in this struggle. Frequently, this struggle will focus around or be lead by one or two persons (see Chapter Three, which discusses the concept of the focal person). The group is working toward a unity that creates a strong sense of relatedness, yet there is a sense of an attempt to respect the individuality of the members.

Fixation with the Bad Mother¹

One of the possible outcomes of the theme of separation of the Good and Bad Mother is the possibility of a growing perception that the social

system symbolically represents a Bad Mother. This is manifest in intense feelings of mistrust, fearfulness, and suspicion of the social system. The group is perceived as capable of destroying or severely circumscribing one's individuality. Predominance of this perception is marked by a sense of the group as bleak and bogged down in inertia and fatigue, leading to feelings of pointlessness and meaninglessness. In this theme, there is little attempt to struggle against or fight to overcome this destructive archetypal influence. Rather, the sense of the group is one of resignation and acceptance of the group at drift and where there is no evidence of personal autonomy being asserted.

Resolution of the Great Mother

The resolution of the struggle with the Great Mother is indicated by a sense that the social system is viewed, for the most part, by the members as a source of life and happiness and symbolic of depth, beauty, goodness, and graciousness. The social system is perceived as accepting, supportive, caring, nurturing, and receptive and responsive to individual needs, but not overprotective. That is, confrontation and conflict continues to occur but it is valued for its contribution to growth and development. The social system may often show struggle in its attempt to maintain these perceptions but even in this struggle there is the sense that the group will not accept itself symbolically as Bad Mother. Mother may have her bad days, but she is basically nurturing, supportive and caring.

Separation of the Good and Bad Father

Another cluster of archetypal themes that are manifest in the social system revolves around the central archetype of the Great Father. Like the Great Mother the structure of this archetype is two-sided. On the one hand members may perceive the social system furthering intellectual exploration and development, symbolically reflected in the image of the Good Father. The Good Father is manifest in the social system's desire to take control, make its own decisions, and determine its own destiny. It is perceived by the members as a force that will help the group realize its own nature and empower it with its own authority. On the other hand the social system may be perceived as an overwhelming, aggressive entity that renders the group impotent and deprives it of self-fulfillment, symbolically expressed as the Bad Father. The Bad Father may be manifest by an intense desire on the part of the members that some structure be defined to fulfill their dependency needs. In the theme of the separation of the Good and Bad Father there is evidence that the social system is perceived from these two points of view. The social system vacillates between these two images as members work to further delineate intellectual explorations and the testing of self-determination on

the one hand and dependence on existing authority structures on the other hand.

Struggle with the Great Father²

The theme of the struggle with the Great Father is characterized by a sense of conflict with and opposition to the Terrible aspect of the Great Father archetype. That is, there is a sense that the group is coming to perceive the designated leadership, the structure, and/or the status quo of the distribution of power in the group as antithetical to its growth. The group seems to be intent on getting rid of those aspects of its existence that are viewed as standing in its way or depriving the group of its own power and authority. The group seems to be developing a means to share and redistribute among the group members the power that once was vested in the designated leader or/and the existing structure of the leadership based on unexamined cultural norms. The social system wants to take control for itself, to assume full responsibility for what happens in the group, to make its own decisions, and to assume its own destiny.

Fixation with the Terrible Father

In this theme the members perceive the social system primarily in terms of an authority figure which seeks to dominate the dynamics of the group. Acceptance of this situation, which defines the fixation theme, is manifest in one of two ways. The group, on the one hand, may remain impotent and totally dependent on the existing authority structure. For example, members may continue to perceive the designated leader as the legitimate and sole source of authority within the group. On the other hand, the social system may come to see itself as the sole source of authority by disregarding the existence of preexisting authority structures and the values and contributions of tradition. There is little or no evidence that the group is consciously or thoughtfully attempting to redefine the structure of authority in order to empower the problem-solving capacity of the social system. Rather the social system appears to be interested in power only for the sake of power.

Resolution of the Great Father

This theme is characterized by a sense that the social system is redefining the existing authority structures. The social system is taking control for itself and assuming responsibility for its own decisions and dynamics. The group seems charged with renewed life and strength in its new-found awareness of its own potential. There seems to be increased emphasis on the importance of dealing with problems rationally and logically. Old rules, norms, conscious tradition, or commentary are seriously questioned as the social system seeks to establish a 'new order', one that is more appropriate to its new level of consciousness. In

redefining these issues the social system does not reject out of hand traditions and norms but seeks to incorporate those that further this new order. Adaptation to reality is becoming increasingly more effective with respect to issues involving authority and decision making. A common manifestation of this process of redefining authority structures is the confrontation with the designated leader as the only source of authority in the group. As a result of this confrontation, the designated leader's role becomes more circumscribed.

Journey of the Hero

The most salient characteristic of the journey theme is the emergence of the individual and the decline of the social system's prominence in the dynamics of the group. Individuals appear to be working interdependently toward the pursuit of a shared mission, quest, aim, or purpose. Working on issues of relatedness between individuals is not viewed as being disruptive but, rather, as necessary to the group's progress. Although there is a shared mission, it is understood that individuals will take ownership of and responsibility for their unique contributions to the shared mission. Another aspect of this mature relationship is the continuing integration of the masculine and feminine dimensions within both the individual and the social system.³ These processes are reflected in a renewed appreciation for seeing, feeling, depth, beauty, inward contemplation, and the acceptance of suffering and pain along with joy and passion as inevitable characteristics of growth.

Description of the coding procedure

In this section, we will summarize the processes and procedures that were used to identify specific archetypal themes as they were manifest in the life cycle of a self-analytic group in graduate education (Dirkx, 1987). An overview of the process will first be presented, followed by more detailed descriptions of each of the major components of the process: development of the coding manual and forms, the unit of observation used in the study, the process of coding, training of the judges, and establishment of reliability and validity of the procedure.

The procedure for identifying archetypal themes manifest in group interaction utilized video and audio-tape technology to record all group sessions. These data were then subjected to a 'coding process' for purposes of classifying periods of interaction. A 'code' is the classification of the observation unit by the judges into one of the twelve archetypal themes described in the previous section or into the 'no evidence' category. Because of the relatively high level of inference required by the coding procedure, three observers or judges were used to independently code all units of observations. The judges'

Consciousness in the small group

observations were periodically tested for interjudge agreement and any serious discrepancies in codings were reexamined and discussed until the judges agreed on a single coding. The archetypal themes identified for each of the ten group sessions were then analyzed according to the specific questions being pursued in the study (Dirkx, 1987).

In the remainder of this section, the specific steps in this process will be discussed in more detail.

The unit of observation

A 15 minute segment was chosen as the unit of observation. This unit has no analytic significance other than to allow for computations of interjudge agreement, and tabulation of codings. It is an arbitrary unit and, for this reason, it is referred to as a unit of observation or coding rather than a unit of analysis. The time period of 15 minutes was chosen because a shorter period may not allow the archetypal theme to be readily manifest. Conversely, a longer time period could potentially provide judges with too much data to use in making their codings. In addition, if the unit of coding were to be substantially longer than 15 minutes, more than one archetypal theme may be observed. Therefore, a 15 minute unit was chosen to avoid the possibility of multiple codings in longer segments. Each group session consisted of approximately eight to 10 coding units.

The coding manual and form

Judges used an explicit and detailed manual to guide their observations of the study group. The *Manual for coding archetypal themes in small groups* (available from the authors upon request) provided the judges with a theoretical discussion of the conceptual framework upon which the coding procedure was based. The manual also specifies the descriptors which were used to define each of the coding categories. In coding the video tapes, the judges followed the detailed step by step procedure of the coding process outlined in the final section of the manual. To record their observations and codings, the judges used a specially designed recording form. The judges completed a coding form for each 15 minute coding unit. On this form, the judges documented the archetypal themes manifest during the unit of observation and the specifications which supported this coding.

The coding process

Judges made their observations and determinations from the videotape recordings. The audiotape recordings were used as a back-up to the

videotape technology. Three judges were employed to code each of the sessions. Prior experience with in-depth coding procedures has shown that relaxation by the judges prior to coding reduces the influence and distraction of extraneous stimuli. For this reason, judges were instructed to relax prior to beginning a session of coding, and not to attempt coding if they felt tired or fatigued.

Each judge was instructed to code the group sessions independently for a 60 minute period of observation. At the end of each coding unit, the judges were told to stop the tape player and complete the coding form for that unit. After the coding form was completed in its entirety, the tape player was again started and the next 15 minute unit was coded. Coding proceeded in this manner for 60 minute intervals. Following each 60 minute period, the codings of each judge were compared. Units of observation for which there was disagreement among one or more of the judges were subjected to review and discussion until judges agreed on a single coding.

During the coding process, emphasis was placed on arriving at an intuitive sense of the group as a whole and what seemed to be going on at the level of the social system. Tentative codings were permissible. The coding of a preceding unit could be changed if convincing evidence emerged in the next unit which caused the judge to reconsider the coding of the previous unit. Each unit of coding, however, was characterized by a single or dominant archetypal theme.

The date and numerical order of all videotapes were masked and each videotape was randomly assigned a code number ranging from 01 to 10. Each judge was then randomly assigned five tapes to code. The order of selection was preserved as the order in which the tapes were to be coded. This action was taken to guard against any bias that might be introduced as a result of a judge's knowledge of the chronological order of the group sessions.

Training of the observers

The methodology described in this chapter requires the use of judges who have been trained to classify units of observation using the categories of archetypal themes described in the previous section. Individuals with certain prior experiences and background need to be recruited and trained in the methodology. The individuals who are recruited to serve as coders need to have a working familiarity with the concepts and ideas of depth psychology, with small groups in general and the notion of the group-as-a-whole in particular. They should have a demonstrated capacity to perceive group interaction from that perspective. In conjunction with the initial study in which this methodology was used (Dirkx, 1987), we developed a training program for individuals who would serve as

observers in a study of the archetypal themes in small group interaction. In the following discussion, we will describe this training program as it was designed and implemented in the initial study.

The purpose of the training program was to ensure that individuals recruited to serve as judges in this methodology accurately and reliably used the archetypal categories in classifying group interaction. The training program consisted of several steps. First, the observers were trained in the theoretical framework employed in the methodology. Judges read and discussed with the trainer articles and text excerpts on the social system of the group (Boyd, 1983, 1984), the notion of the collective unconscious (Hall and Nordby, 1973), and the concept of archetypal themes (Jung, 1971). The judges also reviewed the *Manual for coding archetypal themes in small groups*. This manual provided a listing of the twelve coding categories and the specifications which defined the categories. The observers were then asked to memorize the specifications for each of the twelve categories. The trainer did not discuss with the coders the possibility that the coding categories might be developmentally related to each other. It was specifically pointed out to the judges during training that they were not to view the category scheme in a linear or sequential fashion. They were told that one theme did not necessarily have to follow another in the coding process, and that it was possible that any of the themes could be observed at any time during the course of the group.

Following training in the theoretical framework employed in the methodology and memorization of the category specifications, the coders practiced coding segments of videotape recordings that demonstrated the different archetypal themes. The judges then practiced coding on videotapes from a group similar to the one they would be observing in the study. Practice of coding and discussion of the observations made continued until the judges demonstrated consistency and agreement in their use of the coding categories.

Interjudge agreement

After the theoretical training and sufficient practice to allow the observers to feel comfortable with the process, the procedure was subjected to an interjudge agreement test. A total of seven 15 minute coding units were independently coded by the judges. A weighted proportion of agreement for nominal scales (Cohen, 1968) was used to determine the level of agreement between judges. The proportion of agreement achieved in this test was 0.89. This was considered to be a satisfactory level of agreement and the judges were instructed to begin coding.

Checks of interjudge reliability were also performed for each session coded. The values of interjudge agreement obtained for the coding of

archetypal themes are consistent with other category systems that have attempted to study the group in depth using observational category systems (Boyd et al., 1980; Portal-Foster, 1966; Pridham, 1972; Watson, 1963). The coding procedure for archetypal themes demonstrated adequate reliability as measured by the weighted proportion of agreement method.

Validity of the coding categories

The validity of the coding procedure was examined using three procedures: face validity; construct validity; and check for measurement bias. The results of each of these procedures will be briefly discussed.

Face validity

Lists of specifications for each category were derived from Neumann's (1954) descriptions of the archetypal stages. After a draft of the specifications had been prepared, the researchers carefully reviewed the list of specifications for each stage to be sure that each specification corresponded to the description for that stage provided by Neumann. Specifications which had been reworded in the developmental process and which could not be readily identified with Neumann's descriptions were either reformulated or deleted from the list. As a result, the remaining list of specifications for each archetypal theme closely corresponded to the descriptors for the stage provided in Neumann's work.

The coding categories and their specifications were then reviewed by a scholar knowledgeable in Neumann's theory. The definitions of the categories provided by the specifications were judged to faithfully represent Neumann's descriptions of the respective stages.

Construct validity

Neumann's theory suggests that the archetypes manifest in consciousness development appear more or less sequentially, and in a particular order. Therefore, construct validity of the procedure for coding archetypal themes can be examined by comparing the order of the archetypal themes predicted by the theory and the order actually obtained in our initial study.

The finding from the analysis of the sessions corroborated the theory in that the archetypal themes were manifested in the order predicted by the theory. Another pattern also emerged which was consistent with Neumann's work. The coding procedure was able to identify that certain of the initial mythological motifs or archetypal themes emerged, faded away, and then reappeared later in the group. The finding is consistent with Neumann's theory, which asserts that the archetypal contents of each stage continue to maintain influence even after they are no longer

prominently manifest. In brief, these analyses support the construct validity that exists in the relationship of the methodology to the theory.

Measurement bias

It was indicated earlier that a conference procedure was used to obtain final codings for units of observation in which two or more of the judges disagreed in their initial, independent codings. Therefore, an analysis was conducted to determine if measurement bias represented a significant threat to the validity of the procedure used. The principal question addressed in this analysis was whether any one of the judges influenced the other two judges in any significant way during conferences over disagreements in codings. The possibility of measurement bias in the coding of archetypal themes was extensively examined in three different analyses. The details and specific results of these analyses are available in the report of the original study (Dirkx, 1987). In summary, the results of these analyses suggest that there was no significant source of measurement bias in the procedure that was used to identify archetypal themes in group interaction.

Thus, following an analysis of content and construct validity, and measurement bias, the coding procedure used to identify archetypal themes was found to be of acceptable validity.

Summary

This chapter presented a methodology for the identification and coding of archetypal themes occurring in small interacting groups. The methodology was structured upon the framework of analytical psychology and in particular the work of Erich Neumann. From extensive observations of small groups certain refinements were made on Neumann's theory of mythological motifs. With the method in hand the argument was advanced that self-analytic small groups could be the setting for the development of individuation. This position was set over against certain views, which have been traditionally suspect, of the contribution groups can make toward the processes of individuation. The development of the methodology provided the means to test the thesis that small groups do express archetypal themes and this in turn gave further credibility to the argument that small groups can be a setting for individuals to work on the processes of individuation. When the group encounters archetypal themes individual members have the opportunity to rework their own relationships with these themes and come to a greater expansion of consciousness. A brief account of an extensive study was reported upon in which such issues as operationalization of the methodology, training of coders, reliability, and validity were addressed. Our study demonstrated that the methodology was thoroughly operational. In addition the

examination of construct validity provided further corroboration for the theory of archetypal themes and for our methodology that identified these themes.

Several other dynamics are evident as these processes are taking place. One dynamic which was clearly obvious in our observations was the roles the influential members appear to play in moving the group process in one or another direction. We have long been aware of the significant contributions Redl (1942) had made to our understanding about the influential member's role in the life of a small group. In recognition of this and other investigations of the influential member we had moved to incorporate these dynamics within our larger methodology. The chapter which follows extends our methodology and incorporates the part the influential members play in determining the directions a small group takes.

Notes

1. Our primary focus here is to present general descriptions of each of the twelve themes which constitute the Observational Schedule. It is important, however, to address the various sequences in which these themes may be manifest. Virtually all groups will move through the themes of the Uroborus, awareness of the Great Mother and the separation of the Good and Bad Mother. Following the last theme, the social system may take one of two directions. It may move directly from the separation theme to the theme of the Fixation with the Bad Mother. Alternatively the social system may proceed to the theme of the struggle with the Great Mother. From this theme the social system may manifest either the theme of the resolution of the Great Mother or Fixation with Bad Mother. This pattern is also evident in the patriarchal themes.
2. See note 1 above.
3. This may have reference to the concepts of work and emotionality as discussed by Stock and Thelen (1958).

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Consciousness in the small group

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Robert D. Boyd and John M. Dirkx

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Chapter three

Understanding group transformation through the focal person concept

John M. Dirkx

It is a common observation that certain individuals in small, face-to-face groups develop considerable influence with the rest of the members. Despite the fact that these individuals are usually not in designated positions of leadership, they become the center of the group's attention at certain, critical periods. It is as if, on these occasions, the entity of the group has developed a special relationship with these individuals. The development of this relationship is even more curious, given the fact that the level of influence that these individuals exert is not always proportional to their contribution to the explicit goals and tasks of the group. This phenomenon, which, for purposes of present discussion, we will initially refer to as the 'influential member', can be observed repeatedly and across many different kinds of small groups.

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss a particular form of influential member and the ways in which she/he facilitates group transformation. This form of influential member is referred to as a 'focal person'. The term reflects the essential quality of the phenomenon to which it refers. One member articulates or personifies unconscious concerns which are focal to the group-as-a-whole at that time. The concept is derived from numerous observations of self-analytic groups and from our theoretical understanding of the evolution of consciousness in groups as it is articulated in analytical psychology in general, and by Erich Neumann (1954) in particular. We especially relied on Neumann's notion of the 'Great Individual' to identify the theoretical and empirical properties of this concept. The focal person concept has also been validated in careful and systematic empirical studies of specific hypotheses related to group development and transformation (Dirkx, 1987; Myers, 1986). It is from these prior empirical studies that the present conceptual work is based. Our purpose here is to discuss the theoretical rationale for the focal person concept as a special form of influential member and to demonstrate, through the use of case material from self-analytic groups, its manifestation within periods of archetypal paradox. In the first section of the chapter, the literature on the

influential group member is critically reviewed to establish the theoretical gap which we propose the concept of focal person fills in the small group literature. Various forms of influential member that have been proposed within the last 50 years provide support for the basic conceptual properties of the focal person but fail to provide an adequate means for linking the behavior of these individuals to the unconscious, developmental concerns of the group-as-a-whole. The second section provides a brief description of the conceptual basis of the focal person concept, with specific reference to analytical psychology. In the final section, the focal person concept is illustrated empirically with examples of case material drawn from observations of self-analytic groups in graduate education.

The influential group member: a critical review

The literature on the influential group member can be somewhat abstract and theoretical. To ground this discussion somewhat in the concrete realities of a small group, we have provided the following summary of interaction within a self-analytic group. The vignette illustrates the kind of phenomenon to which the present study is directed.

Members of the group were part of the experiential component of a graduate course in the dynamics of instructional groups. This component consisted of ten group sessions of 150 minutes each. The small group was being conducted in a manner similar to that which characterizes the self-analytic or laboratory group tradition. There was no explicit curriculum or agenda other than the members were expected to observe and study their own behaviors and the dynamics of the group as a whole to further their understanding of the dynamics of instructional groups.

It was early in the second session of the group when the group began to discuss the issue whether and when it should take a break. The instructor's syllabus and verbal directions neither specified nor proscribed the scheduling of such an event. Sue, Tim, and Margaret began to discuss whether the group should take a break. Several other members quickly joined the discussion. It became immediately apparent, however, that the group was having some difficulty arriving at a decision on this matter. Some members were questioning whether everyone should take a break at the same time or whether individual members should simply take a break when they needed. The discussion continued for several minutes in a tentative, halting, and ambiguous manner, as if the group was uncertain of the propriety of such a conversation and their role in deciding such an issue. The group seemed unable to make a decision. At this point, Barbara

announced firmly but calmly that she did not need the group's permission to 'go to the bathroom' and that she would leave whenever it was necessary for her to do so. The group seemed stunned and a nervous, tense silence fell over the members. For a short time, it appeared that the group was trying to assimilate this blatant show of assertiveness. Then, gradually several members began to challenge Barbara's assertive stance, claiming that such 'individualism' threatened the integrity of the group. Others joined in on the challenge and the discussion became increasingly emotional in tone. Statements such as 'What if everyone decided to do that? Where would that leave the group?' and 'You seem to be putting yourself before the group' characterized the group's response. It soon became apparent that the rest of the group members viewed Barbara's claim as a threat against the integrity of the group. Barbara was clearly the center of the group's attention as the interaction patterns were predominantly between her and the rest of the group members. This period of interaction was animated, emotional, tense, and anxious. As the group continued to explore this issue, however, the conversation became increasingly intellectual, the initial emotionality dissipated, and the conversation drifted to other matters with no real resolution as to the issue of the break.

Several questions may be raised about this and similar periods of group interaction. Why and how does a single individual come to be the primary and almost exclusive attention of the rest of the group? Are there different forms of such individual-group relationships that would suggest different dynamics and functions? Are there particular periods in group interaction in which these individuals emerge? To what extent is this phenomenon related to processes of differentiation and individuation that need to occur within the developing group? What implications does the phenomenon of the influential members hold for leaders and consultants of groups in which they occur?

The literature in small group research provides partial and tentative answers to some of these difficult questions. From a sociological perspective, investigators describe the emergence of the influential member in terms of role differentiation, expectations that some members attribute to others, and the distribution of power within the group. For example, the functional roles of energizer, evaluator-critic, encourager, and group harmonizer (Benne and Sheats, 1948), the socio-emotional and task specialists (Slater, 1955), and the categories of 'task roles' and 'social roles' (Bales, 1958) illustrate this perspective. Others have relied on a more psychodynamic interpretation of this phenomenon (Gibbard et al. 1974). Within this perspective, the emergence of the influential member represents a more covert, latent dynamic, characteristic of the

underlying structures or processes of the group-as-a-whole. Examples of this approach include basic assumption leaders (Bion, 1961), role specialists (Dunphy, 1974), emotional leaders (Beck, 1974), and scapegoats (Eagle and Newton, 1981; Toker, 1972).

Thus, both the sociological and psychodynamic traditions have focused our attention on the significance of the influential member to the development and functioning of the group. For the most part, this tradition (particularly, the sociological perspective) has been very helpful in providing group leaders and members with a better understanding of the task or instrumental dimension of group life. That is, the meaning of the influential member to the group-as-a-whole is viewed in terms of its contribution to task or goal attainment, group productivity or more effective decision making. We are concerned here, however, with what one might refer to as the 'symbolic' influential member. More will be said later regarding the symbolic approach to the influential member. At this point it is sufficient to indicate that by the symbolic influential member, we mean the individual within the group who serves to focus the group's attention, either overtly or covertly, on the underlying, unconscious emotions upon which much of the group behavior is based. Several different theoretical formulations of the influential member phenomenon reflect this common theme. A review of these different forms of influential member will provide a better understanding of the theoretical relationship of the focal person to the group-as-a-whole.

Forms of the symbolic influential member

Studies of the influential member attempt to describe particular forms of relationships that form between certain members and the group as an entity. The majority of these studies conceptualize the group in terms of the group-as-a-whole or the social system perspective (Boyd, 1983, 1984; see also Chapter One of this volume). According to this perspective, it is not always helpful or even possible to reduce what goes on in groups to a study of individuals or interpersonal interactions, that is the personality systems. In addition to interacting with other members, the individual can interact and form relationships with the social system. This position is reflected in the observation that, at times, the social system appears to assume a distinct and identifiable stance toward a particular individual in the group. When viewing a group from this point of view, one often has a clear sense that a group attitude exists toward a certain individual. In the case example presented earlier, there is the sense that the social system is in distinct opposition to Barbara. On the other hand, Barbara clearly resisted the social system's need for solidarity and the cultural system's normative code. Thus, the individual-group relationship illustrated in this example and in the phenomenon of

Understanding group transformation

the symbolic influential member reflects characteristics that go beyond interactions of individual group members. Rather, Barbara, as an influential member, interacts and develops a relationship with the social system of the group.

The interaction between Barbara and the social system illustrates a general phenomenon that has been of interest to a number of researchers of small group behavior. That is, particular individuals emerge in special and symbolic positions of influence in the group. Within this tradition, a number of different forms of influential member have been identified, each representing partially overlapping but also distinctly different psychological functions in the individual-group relationship. Among the various forms included in the literature are the prophet (Brueggemann, 1978; Heschel, 1962), charismatic individual (Weber, 1946), central person (Redl, 1942), scapegoat (Dunphy, 1974; Gibbard and Hartman, 1974; Mann, 1967) role specialist (Dunphy, 1974), covert role (Gemmell and Kraus, 1988), hero (Gibbard, 1974; Slater, 1966), and focal person (Myers, 1986). The conceptual descriptions of these forms illustrate several properties that, taken together, characterize the essential qualities of the focal person as a particular form of influential member.

The first of these qualities is reflected in the observation that an individual member, through his or her behavior in the group, may crystallize and constellate the latent, unarticulated emotional concerns of the social system. Several forms of influential member illustrate this property, including the charismatic individual (Weber, 1946), central person (Redl, 1942), role specialist (Dunphy, 1974), and covert role (Gemmell and Kraus, 1988). Max Weber (1946) advanced the concept of the charismatic individual late in the nineteenth century, observing that such a person had power over people because they were suffering. In summarizing Weber's notion, Myers (1986) writes:

Charisma involves an intuitive awareness of what it is that causes the feeling of woundedness among a people. Charisma, therefore, implies a relationship, an almost sacred bond formed between a charismatic person and a community. These gifted individuals embody and are able to articulate the emotions of others. It is particularly in this empathic naming of the origins of pain that their authority and influence in the group is found. Their power exists because of their social relationship with the group. Charismatic persons, said Weber, do not derive authority from ordinances and statutes or from official competence or establishment, but, rather, from a demonstration of the effectiveness of their power in the daily events of their followers' lives.

(pp.54-5)

As will be discussed below, Myers (1986) incorporated this conceptualization into his investigations of the focal person's role in the transition periods of group development.

Weber's notion of the charismatic individual describes the individual-group relationship in terms of the source of power that an individual can hold within the group. Redl (1942), on the other hand, represents another kind of influential member in the form of the central person. This concept refers to an individual who crystallizes the unconscious emotional concerns for the social system and serves to evoke group formative processes within the other group members. According to Redl, the central person is a key figure in the development of a group emotion. The central person provides the means by which members can unconsciously satisfy common undesirable drives and thus avoid feelings of guilt, anxiety, and conflict. Such an individual may intensify aggressive drives and feelings and further constellate the emotion of the group by committing what Redl referred to as the 'initiator act' (p. 35).

Whereas Redl (1942) was concerned with the role of the influential member in group formative processes, Dunphy (1974) was interested in the different kinds of roles that emerge in a small group and how these roles might be related to phase development. He referred to the influential members who come to play these roles in the group as 'role specialists'. According to Dunphy, 'the role specialists are, above all else, the symbols of the predominant emotional states of the group members' (p. 309). He documented five different role specialists – the instructor, aggressor, scapegoat, seducer, and idol – and argued that each of these specialists represented a particular unconscious emotional concern shared by the group members. For example, he felt that the scapegoat represented anxiety of the group regarding personal weaknesses, deriving from frustration of dependency needs. The aggressor was felt to represent the group's harsh and repressive superego functions. In Dunphy's view, role specialists serve as symbols of focal conflict in the group. Change in the areas of conflict is indicated by the relative salience attributed to the specialist at different stages in the life of the group. According to Dunphy, the role specialist is an important 'reference point' for group members as they work to elaborate their group culture.

For Dunphy (1974), the scapegoat is one type of role specialist. As a form of influential member, however, it is generally regarded in the group literature as much more than just a group role. Rather, this form of influential member conceptualizes certain structures and dynamics of the social system. According to Gibbard and Hartman (1974), scapegoating symbolizes the social system's reaction to distress and an attempt to locate or identify the source of this distress. The perceived source of the distress is experienced as responsible for producing

anxiety in the group or is viewed as abandoning, depressing, or potentially destroying the social system. In turn, the social system then seeks to psychologically extrude the source of distress from the group. Often, this 'source' is perceived to be a certain group member or a bad leader, thus the term 'scapegoat'. In this way, the social system seeks to create a 'good group entity' by excluding those elements that are perceived to be bad. Dunphy (1974) and Mann (1967), among others, also share the view that the manifestation of a scapegoat represents facets of the group that members find unacceptable. In the forms of influential member discussed so far, the individual playing the role of the influential member often willingly (if unconsciously) accepts the role. This is not the case, however, with the role of the scapegoat. The scapegoat serves as the recipient of the members' projections of their own anxieties and feelings of dependency.

Another form of influential member that illustrates the property of a representative of the group's underlying, emotional concerns is that of the covert role, advanced by Gemmill and Kraus (1988). In articulating this concept, these investigators attempt to explicate some of the psychological dynamics involved in the emergence of the influential member as a representative of the social system. According to Gemmill and Kraus (1988), covert roles are 'emotional themes based primarily on the latent content of expressed and unexpressed thoughts and feelings and are part of the unconscious of the group' (p. 300). Individuals come to occupy covert roles through their own propensity to express certain emotions that the other members of the group are also feeling but not articulating. Thus, it is through individuals acting within these covert roles that the group's emotional issues are made explicit. The process through which this occurs is referred to by Gemmill and Kraus as the dynamic of 'collective projective identification'. As we will see in the discussion of Neumann's (1954) notion of the 'Great Individual', collective projective identification is the principal psychological mechanism that results in the phenomenon of the influential group member.

Several forms of the symbolic influential member illustrate the second essential quality of the influential member as focal person – that is, the ability of this person to challenge the present order of things, the dominant culture, or tradition. By doing so, these influential members provoke a new awareness within the social system. They call attention to previously taken-for-granted assumptions reflected in the status quo and challenge the validity or usefulness of these assumptions as guidelines for group behavior. Influential group members which have been characterized with this function include the prophet (Brueggemann, 1978; Heschel, 1962) and Myers's (1986) concept of the focal person in the grieving process. The prophet criticizes and rejects the dominant consciousness of the culture, the status quo. In the larger context of

society, the prophet acts as a social critic who castigates and judges society. The prophetic voice is filled with anguish, outrage, and passion, crying out against the way things are and how they deviate from society's highest ideals. The prophet arouses and energizes the culture through the promise that things need not be the way they were. Brueggemann (1978) argues that the prophet's mission is to raise the level of awareness of a people who are despairing and are otherwise unable to consider alternative worlds. It is their lot to nourish and evoke a new consciousness, a new perception which is alternative to the dominant culture.

There are striking parallels between the relationship of the prophet to society, and the relationship of the focal person to the small group. These parallels are exemplified in the work of Myers (1986; also see Chapter Four of this volume) who studied the grieving process in small group development. According to Myers, phase movement is characterized by a process similar to grieving. Relying on the work of Bowlby (1975) and Parkes (1987), he identified four phases to this grieving process: (1) Numbness and panic; (2) Pining and protest; (3) Disorganization and despair; and (4) Restabilization and reintegration. In the group that he followed in his case study, Myers found this process to characterize the transitional periods in the phase development of the social system. A central dynamic in this process is the emergence of a focal person. Relying on the traditions of the central person (Redl, 1942) and the prophetic imagination (Brueggemann, 1978) and his experience of this phenomenon in small groups, Myers suggests two fundamental functions to the focal person in the grieving process. First, the focal person is seen as challenging the status quo of the social system. She/he calls into question the present way of seeing and doing things, and urges the social system to consider alternative views. Second, the focal person energizes the social system toward movement and a new direction. Implicit in both of these functions is the notion of a call within the social system to a new awareness, a new 'epistemology', a new consciousness.

Closely related to the property of critiquing and challenging the status quo is a third function that is illustrated in several descriptions of the influential member. This is the voice of transformation, reflected in the prophet (Brueggemann, 1978; Heschel, 1962), the hero as reflected in mythology (Campbell, 1968; Neumann, 1954) and psychoanalytic thought (Gibbard, 1974; Slater, 1966) and also in the focal person in the grieving process (Myers, 1986). As we have seen, the prophet and the focal person in the grieving process call for movement and change in the present form of the social system. These forms of influential members encourage members of the social system to develop a new vision of the present and asks them to commit themselves to work for the realization

of this vision. The prophetic voice reflects an audacious imagination inspired by deeply felt forces. Through their outrage, members of society are moved to act and change their present behavior, although often not without considerable anguish, anger, and resentment.

The notion of the hero presents us with an even more dramatic illustration of the voice of transformation. The image of the hero provided to us in mythology (Campbell, 1968; Neumann, 1954) is an active one, standing apart from the masses, fighting evil and terrifying enemies, and leading the people against all odds in a struggle for newness. This is an image of transformation through liberation from the forces that keep us oppressed. Having thrown off the shackles of an old and repressive regime, the hero provides us with guidance for movement in establishing a new direction and a new order (Slater, 1966). In psychoanalytic thought (Gibbard, 1974; Slater, 1966), the hero symbolizes for the rest of the social system the constant and challenging forces of opposition between consciousness and the unconscious and, in so doing, expresses the social system's continuing struggle to achieve liberation from the unconscious. Often, this individual stands alone and directly against the forces of the collectivity. As a result, members of the social system begin to gradually become aware of distinctions and differences, the dawning of consciousness within the social system. Through the actions of the hero, the processes of differentiation and individuation are furthered within the social system.

Thus, we have seen that a fairly extensive research tradition has developed around the phenomenon of the influential member. This research provides support for the symbolic approach to understanding this phenomenon and for the principal attributes that are fundamental to our concept of the focal person. In the preceding section, three major functions of the influential member as a focal person were derived from prior studies of the influential member phenomenon: (1) a representation of the unconscious emotional concerns of the social system which are fundamentally opposing and seemingly contradictory; (2) a critique of the status quo and movement toward a new awareness; and (3) a voice for transformation of the social system. In addition, several qualities or characteristics attributed to different forms of the influential member further define the empirical nature of this concept. Social systems which exhibit the influential member phenomenon develop a polarization between the influential member and the rest of the social system. This is often reflected in a rallying behind the influential member or a concerted, collective action to block or impede the direction suggested by this individual. Some forms of influential member are seen as challenging and energizing the social system. Finally, the research literature suggests that the consequences of the influential member in the social system are not always positive, in the sense that the social system moves

toward greater differentiation and integration. At times, these functions can serve considerable negative consequences as well. History is replete with examples of such phenomena.

In what ways, however, does the concept of focal person build on this earlier tradition? Where is the need for yet another conceptual form of influential member? It is to these questions that we now turn.

Relationship of focal person to prior studies of influential member

The previous section established several ways in which the focal person concept is similar to other forms of influential member that have been reported in the literature. In this section, we will investigate the ways in which the focal person concept differs conceptually and phenomenologically from these previous concepts.

One of the most significant differences rests with the theoretical breadth of the focal person concept. While one or more of the functions described in the preceding paragraph can be attributed to any one form of influential member, no other concept seems to adequately account for all these functions within a single theoretical framework. We believe that this is, in part, because many of these different forms do not attempt to conceptually link the behavior of the influential member with specific unconscious concerns that are focal to the social system within a given period of time. The focal person concept, however, conceptualizes not only the behavior of a particular group member but the unconscious emotionality and concerns of the social system as well, reflected in the notion of the archetypal paradox. Each of the three functions identified for the focal person relate to the emergence of the focal person as an influential member within a period of group paradox. The functions serve to explicate, illuminate, and eventually move the social system through this paradox. Thus, while different group members may perform different functions at different times, the behaviors cohere within the focal person concept because the functions are related theoretically to a specific context in the group, that of the archetypal paradox. It is recognition of the archetypal paradox which the social system confronts that helps make sense of the individual behaviors of the influential member as focal person.

Other important conceptual and phenomenological differences, however, also exist. Many of the studies reviewed earlier seek to explain the manifestation of the influential member and the representation of collective unconscious emotions in terms of a personal psychology. In several of these forms of influential group member, the individual is thought to express latent emotions which are experienced by all group members as a result of their individual maturation. Anxieties and fears associated with separation from maternal figures and with relationships

with authority figures in the group are two examples of latent emotions manifest in small groups that have been attributed to maturational processes in the individual (Slater, 1966).

Many of the previous formulations of the influential member place considerable emphasis on the volition of an individual. Although there is indication in some of these ideas that the social system 'selects' the particular individual, most of the theoretical elaboration focuses more on the individual member than on the social system. For example, Myers based his conceptualization of focal person primarily on a psychoanalytic view of individual behavior in the group. As such, it relates the function of focal person to a personalistic view of attachment, separation, and loss. His concept of focal person does not explicitly take into account the possibility that such a phenomenon in the social system may reflect deeper, more primordial structures than are evident in personal histories. In addition, his methodology was directed primarily to the study of individual behavior. Individuals were identified as focal persons when their behaviors manifested certain characteristics. Although transactions with the social system were, to some extent, taken into account in this methodology, the social system is not a prominent dimension of his formulation of the focal person and of his methodology for identification of influential group members as focal persons. Other forms of influential member that reflect this personalistic bias include central person, role specialist, and covert role.

The notion of focal person, as it is described here, however, is really a phenomenon attributed to the collectivity which becomes manifest in a particular individual member. Focal person reflects forces which are fundamentally archetypal in nature and are associated with the evolution of consciousness within social systems (Neumann, 1954). The group 'takes possession' of an individual who is then felt to be 'in the grips' of the collectivity. As consciousness develops in the social system, the focal person is gradually released by the social system. During this time, the individual serves to mediate within the social system, becoming less and less powerful over time. Rarely, however, do these other theorists talk about the influential group member symbolically disintegrating in the process of consciousness development. This phenomenon is a fundamental attribute of the concept of focal person.

In several of these earlier formulations there is the sense that the influential group member is serving a kind of defensive function in the group. Characteristic of this stance are the notions of the scapegoat and central person, which are usually viewed as a kind of group psychological defense mechanism against unwanted or undesirable thoughts and feelings. In this sense, they represent a somewhat negative dynamic in the social system's development. Furthermore, the influential member in the form of a scapegoat is viewed as a threat to the group and must

be psychologically eliminated from it. The function of the central person, as it is described by Redl (1942), is also primarily defensive in nature. The psychological mechanisms involve the satisfaction of undesirable drives on the part of individual members through the behavior of the central person. Through these mechanisms, members avoid feelings of guilt, anxiety, and conflict. Rather than contributing to separation and differentiation, the central person actually promotes psychological fusion among the group members. This defensive function of the influential member is also illustrated in the concept of scapegoating. In scapegoating, the group protects itself by getting rid of its undesirable content through projection of this content onto a single member and then psychologically or physically ostracizing this member from the group.

The concept of focal person, however, places emphasis on the transformative function of the influential group member. Although the social system's relationship with this individual may initially be decidedly negative in overall emotional tone, as is the case in the example provided earlier, the relationship frequently evolves into one that is more constructive and positive. Indeed, in many cases the focal person may initially be serving a defensive function for the social system. The theoretical emphasis of this concept, however, is not on this defensive function but, rather, on its transformative function. The focal person is viewed within the context of a developing individual-group relationship and the gradual evolution and transformation of consciousness within the social system.

In summary, the literature in small group research clearly supports the idea that certain individuals at certain times in the life of the group become extremely influential. Much of this research is in the sociological or social psychological tradition and is concerned primarily with the manifest, instrumental nature of this role. The psychodynamic literature, however, stresses the importance of the symbolic nature of the influential group member and it is with this form of the influential member with which we are concerned. This tradition stresses the underlying, latent, and largely unconscious emotions, conflicts, and forces that are represented by the emergence of the influential member. In different ways, the influential member is viewed as mediating resolutions to these unconscious conflicts. These characteristics are consistent with our formulation of the influential member as a focal person. There is a need, however, for a framework that conceptualizes this phenomenon as a unitary set of interrelated functions. Such a framework needs to view the influential member as a characteristic of collective behavior rather than individual behavior and as a powerful force in the transformation of the social group. We are proposing that the conceptual framework of focal person, grounded in analytical psychology,

represents a more adequate way to view and study the influential member from a symbolic perspective. We now turn to a discussion of this framework.

The conceptual basis for the focal person concept

In this section, the theoretical framework for the concept of the focal person will be discussed in three parts: (1) The symbolic approach as a way of understanding group phenomena in general and the concept of focal person in particular; (2) Archetypal paradox as a way of viewing and interpreting focal concerns of the social system; and (3) The relationship of the focal person concept to Neumann's (1954) concept of the Great Individual.

The symbolic approach to the focal person

The concept of the focal person reflects a symbolic approach to the study and understanding of the influential member phenomenon. By the term 'symbolic approach', we imply a theoretical framework and method for understanding and interpreting human behavior that are provided by the field of analytical psychology (Whitmont, 1969). We have used the lens of analytical psychology and the symbolic approach to develop a fuller theoretical perspective for viewing what the influential member really means to the social system of a small group. It is using this lens that leads us to conclude that, in certain circumstances, the influential member seems to be articulating underlying concerns which are focal to the social system at the time. Thus, it is clear that the focal person concept reflects a symbolic interpretation of small group behavior. Therefore, a few words about what we mean by the symbolic approach seem in order.

In the symbolic approach, overt, manifest behavior and emotions which characterize the emergence of the focal person as an influential member are viewed as representing deeper, largely unconscious concerns with which the group is struggling in its movement toward wholeness and maturity. These concerns comprise what we refer to as the psychic life of the social system. As the social system begins to form and develop, a variety of these unconscious concerns are activated. Understanding and working through these concerns are essential to movement and growth of the social system and of its members. They are not, however, fully knowable through intellectual or conceptual terms alone (Whitmont, 1969). Rather, from the point of view of the symbolic approach, these concerns become manifest through the expression of symbols or images. Symbols express much more than can be put into mere words (Christ, 1989) and are, in a fundamental sense, a means for

coming into contact with that which is essentially unknowable (Whitmont, 1969). They are grounded in the unconscious of the group but take their manifest forms by shaping and molding the ideas, behaviors, and emotions present in the conscious dimension of group life. The symbol presents an 'objective, visible meaning behind which an invisible, profounder meaning is hidden' (Jacobi, 1959, p. 77). It is a kind of mediator between opposing and seemingly contradictory forces of consciousness and the unconscious, between the manifest and the hidden. Understanding of the psychic reality of the social system involves the perception and apprehension of the symbols that are expressed through group interaction and of their effect on feeling and intuition (Whitmont, 1969).

Thus, the symbolic approach is concerned with the unconscious, emotional, intuitive, and imaginative realms of group function. It is a way of studying and investigating certain group phenomena. When we view group phenomena from a symbolic perspective, we are trying to understand the deeper, underlying meaning that these phenomena hold for the group, the contradictions implicit in them between the unconscious and conscious forces within the group, between the hidden and the manifest.

The case example provided in the opening section of this chapter provides an illustration of the symbolic approach to understanding group life. At one level, we may view the issue of whether the group should take a break as a routine decision with which most groups must deal in one form or another. We could then examine the process from a decision-making point of view and seek to determine the factors that affected the process. This approach would exemplify an instrumental perspective of the relationship between Barbara and the social system. Yet, as we ponder the significance of this period of interaction, we are struck by the level of significance that the social system seems to be attributing to the issue of a 'break'. The social system's investment in this issue appears to be quite disproportionate to the overall value of the issue to the instrumental life and work of the group. Although the issue was initially raised in a fairly rational and straightforward manner, discussion quickly became animated and emotional in its tone. What started out as a decision about taking a 'break' evolved into an analysis of Barbara's commitment to the group. Conversation and interaction around this issue persisted for approximately 45 minutes before drifting off to other matters, with no explicit resolution of whether the group should take a 'break'. For the investigator using the symbolic approach, attention is drawn to the significance and meaning of this issue for the social system. The 'break' has thus taken on the dimensions of a symbol for the social system. It leads us to deeper questions of meaning, such as trying to understand why the group had so much difficulty in dealing

with what, on the surface, appears to be a routine and straightforward issue regarding group procedure and maintenance.

Symbols that arise within group life and characterize the social system are referred to as collective symbols. They are manifestations of universal, fundamentally archetypal forms. Because of their power and the richness of their content, they become assimilated by the larger collective and, therefore, become collective symbols. They express those unconscious factors that are generally more prevalent in the larger group (i.e. the social system) than in individuals (i.e. the personality system). As such their manifestation tends to have a more demonstrable effect on the social system, rather than individuals within the group. The focal person as an influential member represents such a collective symbol. In the case material, Barbara, as a focal person, comes to manifest the symbolic meaning that the issue of a 'break' holds for the social system. Through the 'break', the social system is manifesting deeper, largely unconscious concerns regarding its psychic reality. Barbara comes to serve the role of focal person by raising the issue of the 'break' and the underlying, unconscious concerns associated with this symbol. In effect, she named a deep seated paradox with which the group was beginning to struggle. As a collective symbol, the 'break' expresses opposing and contradictory impulses of the collective unconscious of the social system. The discussion and period of interaction surrounding the issue of the break illustrate what we have come to call an 'archetypal paradox' of the social system. It is within the context of an archetypal paradox that we believe the phenomenon of the focal person is manifest.

The archetypal paradox

The notion of the archetypal paradox is derived from the theoretical framework of analytical psychology, and principally the work of Erich Neumann (1954). The paradoxical perspective is 'concerned with the observation that groups are pervaded by a wide range of emotions, thoughts, and actions that their members experience as contradictory, and that the attempts to unravel these contradictory forces create a circular process that is paralyzing to groups' (Smith and Berg, 1987, p.14). A group paradox reflects a struggle with opposites in an attempt to create meaning and coherence. Such struggles characterize Neumann's (1954) description of the archetypal development of consciousness. These struggles are archetypal in nature and are manifest in universal mythological motifs or symbols which mark the gradual, stage-like emergence of consciousness within social groups (Neumann, 1954; Ulanov, 1971; Whitmont, 1982). Neumann's descriptions of such mythological motifs as the Great Mother, Separation of World Parents, Birth of the Hero, and Slaying of the Mother and the Father vividly

depict these struggles and the paradoxes which characterize them. Thus, the term 'archetypal paradox' refers to the fundamental, primordial, and contradictory forces that groups face as they struggle for increasing consciousness.

An illustration of an archetypal paradox that we have studied in the small group is reflected in the symbol of the social system as both a good and bad mother. Many researchers have reported that, in the formative stages of group development, members unconsciously experience the social system as a maternal entity (Bion, 1961; Durkin, 1964; Gibbard and Hartman, 1974; Jaques, 1974; Ruiz, 1972; Scheidlinger, 1974). Furthermore, some investigators have reported that the social system of the group may be perceived as both a good and bad mother. Descriptions of the mother symbol early in the life of a group find their parallels in Neumann's (1954) discussion of the evolution of consciousness (Dirks, 1987). Neumann's discussion clearly demonstrates how the symbol of the social system as mother evolves from a state of near complete fusion to gradual differentiation into its good and bad aspects. Neumann equates this process with the dawning of consciousness within the social system.

What is of relevance here, however, is the paradoxical nature of the social system reflected in this dual image of the mother, and the role that certain individuals play in its resolution. Members perceive the social system as a mother that is both good and bad. For example, individuals often act as if the group is an accepting, supportive place, only to find out that the group can, at times, seem very unaccepting and unsupportive. This creates a sense of the group as a bad mother, which then invites enquiry into why it is so, manifesting, in the process, aspects of the good mother. It is, as Smith and Berg (1987) suggest, a vicious circle. It is only when members begin to see that the good and bad aspects are intrinsic to the nature of the social system that they are then able to move beyond this debilitating paradox.

Key to the resolution of the paradox, then, is the emergence of an individual who, on behalf of the rest of the social system, is capable and willing to 'do battle with the mother dragon' (Neumann, 1954). For the group to successfully resolve the archetypal paradox, an individual – the focal person – must be present in the group who serves to crystallize for the social system its own feelings toward the powerful archetype that is at the core of the paradox. The focal person serves as a repository of the members' unconscious concerns regarding the archetype. In the case of the group as both a good mother and a bad mother, the group comes to discern the qualities of the Good and Bad Mother archetypes through the actions of the focal person. The focal person acts to symbolically challenge the relationship that the group has to the Great Mother or to energize the group to attend to and deal with this powerful archetype.

Again, much of this 'activity' is going on at the symbolic level within the social system. At the overt level, group interactions with this individual often manifest characteristics of the paradox at issue in the social system. For example, the particular individual who is serving as the focal person for the group will express ambivalence toward the group as mother, reflecting an ambivalence toward the mother that characterizes the social system itself. This ambivalence is illustrated perhaps most clearly in the sense that the focal person expresses, usually symbolically, both attraction to and avoidance of the mother image. In so doing, the focal person reflects the group's unconscious concerns surrounding this archetype. As a result of the focal person behavior, the group is able to mobilize itself in a particular direction relative to the archetypal paradox. If the focal person is not present, these feelings will remain diffuse, poorly articulated, and the group will not be able to successfully differentiate the good and bad aspects of its matriarchal dimension. Movement in the social system to resolve the associated archetypal paradox is unlikely and the social system will be characterized primarily by the qualities which characterize the image of the bad mother. In other words, a predominantly negative form of matriarchal consciousness will continue to dominate life in the social system.

The focal person concept is closely related theoretically to another idea derived from analytical psychology, that of the Great Individual. We close this section with a brief discussion of how these two ideas are related and a brief synopsis of the process of collective projective identification, the psychological mechanisms through which this phenomenon comes about.

The Great Individual and the focal person concept

We have chosen to label the individual who comes to represent the primary, unconscious concerns of the social system as 'focal person'. The term identifies the essential quality of the concept – namely, certain individuals play a focal role in articulating the social system's concerns. Theoretically, the concept is grounded specifically in Neumann's (1954) work on the development of consciousness and, specifically, in his notion of the 'Great Individual'. Neumann was concerned primarily with articulating the phylogenetic and ontogenetic basis for consciousness and did not specifically address the problem of consciousness in face-to-face groups. The dynamics and characteristics that he attributes to the Great Individual are quite applicable to certain forms of symbolic influential members in small groups as well. For this reason, we have chosen to refer to this phenomenon in the small group as 'focal person' to clearly indicate that we are referring to an aspect of small group life, rather than larger, cultural, or social groupings. To better understand the

specific nature and characteristics of the focal person concept, however, we will briefly review Neumann's characterization of the Great Individual and the related notion of the 'hero'.

In his essay, 'The group and the Great Individual', Neumann (1954) argues that the collective unconscious of the group manifests itself by taking possession of an individual in the group. The group experiences its unconscious psychic wholeness in the person of the Great Individual. This person serves as both the group self and the unconscious self of each member. The individual becomes the archetypal representative of the group's totality. The function of the Great Individual is to convey to the group, either unconsciously or through conscious participation in his/her role, the contents of the collective unconscious. In this sense, the individual is the forerunner of consciousness in the group. The role of the individual in the consciousness of groups and its accompanying emotional arousal are also addressed by Harding (1965) who argues that the pattern of the group presupposes the existence of a leader. This individual voices the unconscious or partly unconscious wishes of the crowd, which can lead to redemptive as well as destructive consequences. In the process of consciousness development, the Great Individual gradually develops a mediatory function, yielding more and more of its manna to the group members. In this sense, the Great Individual is thus disintegrated and 'dismembered' in the process of consciousness development. Neumann cites as an example of the Great Individual the temporary leader of a group who has no relationship to the permanent leadership but who contributes something unique and valuable for the group within a specific situation and for the moment only.

Neumann's (1954) second and third forms of the 'Great Individual', as they relate to the individual-group relationship, embody the principal characteristics of the focal person concept. The Great Individual is a representative of the emotionality attached to unconscious issues and conflicts of the larger culture. Through his or her actions, this individual challenges the social system's present definitions of the status quo and calls for the development of a new awareness and level of consciousness. Finally, the Great Individual acts as a voice for transformation. The image of the hero, of which Neumann and others in the field of analytical psychology were concerned, is also a form of the Great Individual. The hero is viewed as assisting the social system in wresting consciousness from the seductive pull of the collective unconscious (Neumann, 1954; Samuels, 1985). The hero emerges in opposition to the collective, regressive pull of the social system, embodying for the rest of the group the desire for ego consciousness. The struggle represented in the image of the hero's drive for ego consciousness in the midst of an overwhelming unconsciousness is a central attribute of the concept of the focal person.

The focal person phenomenon emerges in the small group through the psychological process of collective projective identification. A thorough discussion of the process is beyond the scope of this chapter. A brief discussion of its more salient aspects may help us better understand the relationship of the focal person to the social system of the group. For purposes of our discussion of the influential member, it is sufficient to say that this concept refers to a process in which the social system projects unconscious content onto a particular individual who has a 'hook' on which the social system can 'hang' the projection (Ogden, 1982). Having done so, the social system then continues to partially identify with the projected content, thereby creating the complex of feelings and emotions that usually accompany the emergence of a symbolic influential member. Given a certain level of congruency between an individual's propensity for an emotional concern and the social system's concerns, this individual will be unconsciously selected by the group to express at an individual level what the social system cannot or will not explicitly express at a collective level. In particular, the notion of congruency between the unconscious emotional concerns of the individual and the group is an important quality of the individual-group relationship reflected in the concept of the focal person.

The focal person concept: case examples

We are now in a position to elaborate on the specific characteristics of the focal person concept. Broadly speaking, the three fundamental characteristics or functions of the focal person concept are: (1) Representation of the unconscious concerns of the social system; (2) Critique of the present order, way of seeing things, or framing of problems; and (3) Voice for change and transformation of the social order. Each of these broad, conceptual categories will be defined further through empirical specifications. These specifications make reference to phenomena which, given the appropriate frame of reference, one can readily observe in an interactive small group. We will utilize case material from self-analytic groups in graduate education to empirically illustrate each of these categories and their related specifications and to serve as the basis for further discussion.

Representation of the unconscious concerns of the social system

A fundamental characteristic of the focal person concept is the ability of the individual as a focal person to crystallize and call forth the unconscious emotional concerns of the social system. The following excerpt of case material is designed to illustrate this quality of the focal person.

It was the second meeting of the group which consisted of eight women and two men, all returning adult students and most of them employed in education or business. During the first 15 minutes, discussion was not particularly focused and many topics were brought up and then dropped. At first, members appeared to be looking frequently at the designated leader while they talked. The designated leader, however, did not respond to their visual contacts and was silent during this period. Gradually, however, members began to look more at each other as they talked and appeared less concerned about the leader. Some members expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of the videotape from the first session. In a friendly and caring way, Betty asked Mike about his lack of expression in the group so far. Mike acknowledged his behavior but indicated it was not unusual for him. He then asked about the purpose of this group. His question led to a more focused period of discussion about the progress of the group so far. Loretta suggested that the group needed more structure in order to progress. Several of the members joined in at this point and the discussion revolved around the question of whether to have structure or not, and how much. Some suggestions were made as to how they might introduce some structure. Betty responded to this by talking about how this group was different from the business groups with which she worked, where one is expected to act in certain ways. She then said, 'You know, the nice thing about this group is that if you all decided you wanted to do something this week, like read a paper or something, I'd feel totally free to say, "You go ahead. I'm not going to do that this week." I'd feel totally free to say that. I feel that I would have permission to say that.' The group appeared stunned for a moment, as attention seemed to turn directly to her. One of the members half-jokingly said, 'Who gave you permission?' and the rest of the group laughed nervously. Betty reaffirmed her feeling of freedom in the group to not go along with the group's plans. Interaction at this point was punctuated by a series of short silent pauses after Betty's comments and the group appeared to be increasingly focusing on Betty. Interaction was still friendly on the surface but there was a sense of tension in the comments and questions that members directed toward Betty. Some members asked her about who she felt responsible for and that actions of one member surely affect the others as well. Others said that they didn't feel Betty was trying to 'break up the group or anything like that'. Betty then indicated that this sometimes happens with business groups and she sometimes urges, but doesn't force the 'deviant' member to go along with the group. Mary asked Betty if she would want them to urge her to go along with the group. Nora wondered what Betty would think if they told her that her not going along would affect their level of

Understanding group transformation

learning in the group, to which Betty responded, 'I'd like to believe that I would be able to say, "That's your problem." ' 'Again, this comment was followed by a brief period of silence in which the group appeared stunned. Nora explained that in community and political action groups it was very important for the members to know that others were committed to the group and that they could trust each other not to put themselves above the group. Clara expressed some concern about Betty's earlier comment about this group being so different from other groups. Betty responded by saying that, if she pulled out of a group exercise, her behavior would make the group more honest, not more unique. Clara then said that she found Betty's comments acceptable but she wondered how they were going to manage or keep going without structure. Several members mentioned the idea of commitment to the group and indicated their own commitment to being in the group. The group leader then offered a metaphorical interpretation of the group's behavior, 'You have to learn to love the mother before you can love the father.' His comment was followed by a brief pause and then loud laughter in the group, as several members expressed complete surprise and confusion over the interpretation. Attention seemed for several minutes to be directed at what the leader might have meant by this metaphor but then began to talk about the term 'Instructional' in the title of the course. This was a topic of discussion for several minutes as several members suggested ways to interpret 'Instructional' for their group. Clara suggested that she would like to talk about mothers more. Betty at first responded by taking the discussion back to the issue of the course title and then seemed to come back to Clara's suggestion by asking people if they had read the book, *My mother, myself*. The group's attention again seemed to be riveted on Betty as she spoke briefly about her relationship with her own mother. Gradually, other members began to talk about their own lives and relationships with their parents and interaction became less focused on Betty and more evenly distributed throughout the group.

This brief summary of a relatively short period of group interaction exemplifies one of the major characteristics of the focal person, that of acting as a representative of the concerns of the social system. The particular individual assuming that role in this segment is Betty. Several qualities of this interaction reflect the specifications of this category. First, there is little doubt that Betty gradually became the focus of the group's attention. Discussion and interaction during the first 15 minutes was relatively diffuse and unfocused. Gradually, however, a group theme began to emerge around the issue of structure in the group. Betty's reaction to the implicit suggestions in this discussion was to say,

in effect, that she probably would not go along with any group plans for assignments or exercises. Both verbal and nonverbal patterns of interaction leave little doubt that Betty quickly became the center and focus of the group's concern and attention. For the next 15 minutes, most of the members were either talking directly with Betty or about her position.

Within this period of interaction, there is also an increase in the level of emotionality in the group. As the group increasingly focused on Betty's comments and the meaning of what she was saying, the group became more tense and anxious. This is reflected in the strained pauses that followed Betty's comments, the nervous laughter which frequently punctuated interaction, and the overall sense of strain that the group seemed to be feeling.

What, then, do these two qualities suggest about the underlying, here-and-now concerns of the social system? From a manifest point of view, the group appears to be talking about the kind and level of structure that may be adopted in the group. At a symbolic level, the discussion reflects the unconscious concerns of the social system. There can be little doubt as to the meaning of the group's reaction. Clearly, Betty's behavior was interpreted as a threat to the integrity of the group and its formative processes. Members were quite concerned about the effects of such actions on the rest of the group. The interaction raises to the observable level the fundamental paradox with which the group is struggling. At one level, we can speak of this paradox as one of the individual versus the group. Group work, the interaction suggests, requires commitment and trust from all the members but, if we commit to the group, we might lose our individual freedom to be ourselves. If we act, as Betty is suggesting, as individuals, then the integrity of the group will be in jeopardy. From an archetypal point of view, however, Betty's behavior may be interpreted as activating the members' unconscious concerns regarding the social system as the Great Mother. Similar to the group's behavior, the archetype of the Great Mother represents a struggle with an overwhelming entity that is perceived at once as both containing and constraining, as protecting and destroying, as nurturing and enslaving (Neumann, 1954). In myths which manifest the archetype, individuals fear the awesome, smothering power of the Great Mother, but also fear separating from her and leaving her to be on their own. They both desire and loathe the containment that the Great Mother provides.

Thus, in the case material, Betty's behavior and the group's reaction to it strongly suggest that the matriarchal archetype was activated within the collective unconscious of the social system. Betty, as a focal person, is symbolically calling the group's attention to this archetypal paradox and their need to address its opposing and contradictory forces (i.e. the

Understanding group transformation

aspects of the social system as both a good and bad mother). That her call is tapping into a concern of the social system is affirmed by the group's reaction to her statements of individuality and personal freedom, and also the direction and content of the interaction that followed. As group interaction became less focused on Betty and more evenly distributed, members began to share fairly personal stories of their own lives and relationships with their parents. Again, at the symbolic level, we may interpret this behavior as a willingness on the part of the social system to work on the paradox that is at the heart of the Great Mother archetype. The members are, at once, becoming more individuated from the group, while affirming the social system as a good mother, one that is receptive and supportive, one that nurtures, cares for its members, and fosters relatedness and connectedness (Ulanov, 1971). It should come as no surprise to learn that the good mother-bad mother issue is far from resolved in this interaction. This group continued to struggle with the opposing sides of this paradox for many sessions.

In summary, when a focal person emerges as the representative of the social system's unconscious concerns, periods of group interaction are characterized by a single individual (usually, but at times it may involve more than one person) increasingly becoming the exclusive focus of the group's attention. Discussion and interaction seem to revolve around this individual. Virtually all other members are directing their comments and attention to this one person who, in turn, is usually talking to and interacting with the group, rather than with any one particular individual. This individual appears to consume the group's time and energy for the duration of this interaction, as illustrated in the case example. In the next selection of case material, we focus on the second fundamental characteristic of the focal person, that of critiquing the present order and challenging the group to develop a new awareness.

Critique of the current social order

Another way in which the focal person helps the group move through the paradoxical situation is to offer a direct challenge to the group through a critique of the way things are. The focal person calls into question present assumptions regarding how the social situation is defined (Myers, 1986). This function is, in a sense, a call to reframe the paradoxical situation in which the group finds itself (Smith and Berg, 1987). The following selection from the first 30 minutes of session illustrates the development of focal person activity within the context of the good mother-bad mother paradox.

The group started this session by several members relating personal experiences since the group had last met. The topics in this discussion

included experiences in a local election, a funeral that one of the members had attended, and a visit from a grandmother. Sylvia, a member who had provided considerable negative characterizations of her mother in earlier sessions, took a few minutes at this time to relate to the group her mother's visit. Nell asked what was next and Candy suggested that this was the last chance for their own agenda. A couple of suggestions about what to do were raised, such as reflecting on what the group had done right and what they had done wrong and planning for reunion, but none of these were taken seriously. Interaction during this time was punctuated by periods of giggling and several members talking at once. Candy then asked if individuals felt things were resolved, indicating that she did not have a sense of resolution about several things. As she talked, Candy became very excited and animated, demonstrating considerable energy over the issues she was raising. Some of the issues were concerned with conflicts that she felt were unresolved. She wondered how safe people felt about bringing up conflicts and the level of safety and security that others felt in the group. She asked the group why they had not confronted their conflicts. Indicating that she felt anxious as she talked, she voiced resentment about dealing with 'Mother outside of the group'. Some one suggested that perhaps there are not any safe groups. Candy clearly had the attention of the group during this time when Betty entered the discussion. Interaction then seemed to occur primarily between Betty and Candy. Betty also began to criticize the group for not effectively dealing with the conflicts which seemed to largely involve her. She said that she could not trust the group to 'work things out', and felt threatened when she wanted to disagree. She referred to this state of affairs as a 'real sickness'. The group then began to talk about the conflict that occurred in the group, but the discussion seemed to become somewhat more abstract and intellectual. It was at this time that the leader intervened and the group's attention then turned to a consideration of his interpretation.

This vignette clearly demonstrates the critiquing function of the focal person. Similar to the preceding case material, this period of interaction is characterized by a focusing of the group's attention on a single individual. In this case, however, two individuals emerged to alternately serve in the capacity of focal person (Candy and Betty). The interactions were highly charged emotionally and the focal persons were addressing what seemed to be a contradictory and irreconcilable problem, that of raising conflicts but not being able to openly confront them or work them through satisfactorily. There is also a sense of polarization between the focal persons and the rest of the group around these related

Understanding group transformation

issues. Candy and Betty are challenging and 'pushing' the group in some manner. In this short vignette, it is not possible to develop a firm sense of the social system. Candy and Betty dominated most of this period while the rest of the members sat and listened attentively, with some members making occasional comments. While they were quiet, there is little question that all the members were deeply invested in the interaction and were actively, if nonverbally, participating. This level of involvement reflects the kind of rallying or sense of infatuation that, at times, focal persons are able to elicit from the social system. At other times, however, the social system may push back, instead of falling in behind the focal person, as was the case in the preceding vignette.

When the focal person is in the role of critic, he/she may be viewed by the group as either a source of irritation and agitation, or as a source of hope for the future. In the former sense, the group will attempt to get the individual to return to the fold, or will reject him/her as a member. In the latter, the group will rally behind the individual in the hopes of being lead out of their present predicament. This is clearly the situation in the case material at hand. Both Candy and Betty are challenging current definitions of the status quo. They are calling for new assumptions that may guide them or allow the group to redefine their situation. The next section focuses on the role of the focal person as a voice of transformation.

A voice of transformation

The role of the focal person as a voice of transformation is closely related to the characteristic of critique of the present social order. The differences may well be ones of degree, rather than kind, in that, in the process of challenging the social system and encouraging the development of new awareness, the focal person is also laying the ground for the overthrow of the present way of doing things and the establishment of a new order or a new epistemology (Myers, 1986). While the focal person as critic may well point out what is wrong with the status quo, the focal person as voice of transformation also is prepared to lead the group in the establishment of a new way of being. This function is illustrated in the following case material, taken from the seventh session of another self-analytic group in graduate education. The group was composed of six men and six women.

In the third session of the group, Jake, one of the male members who had an administrative role in a local school district, had severely criticized Emma. This confrontation went unchallenged by the social system or any single member and Jake continued to exert considerable power over the other members. As a result, the group

developed an oppressive climate in which Jake dominated the group in a quiet but seductive manner. It was clear that considerable tension existed between the social system and this male member and the group appeared stuck, being unable to resolve or work through the conflict implicit in the situation. In session six, Ruth raised the question of who should be the leader in the group. She was obviously calling into question the legitimacy of the *ipso facto* leadership that had been assumed by Jake and suggesting that the whole issue of leadership be redefined and examined. Her call, however, went unanswered and she mustered very little support from the rest of the social system. In session seven, Ruth sat quietly for much of the session, until someone asked her to share what was going on with her. Her response was careful and measured but her voice was full of quiet rage. She said that last week she had taken a risk for the group and had urged the group to stand up to Jake and his reification of the current regime and power structure. She indicated that she felt abandoned and, in a sense, hung out to dry. The response of the social system was as if they had not heard what she had said. Ruth said no more for the remainder of the session and, for that matter, closed down emotionally for the duration of the group.

In this segment, Ruth and the social system display all the principal characteristics of the focal person that we have articulated in this chapter. In session six, when Ruth comes forward to openly challenge Jake's leadership in the group, she articulates the tension and anxiety that has been almost palpable in the group up to then. The conflict between Jake and the rest of the group is clearly observable. Like the emperor who had no clothes, however, no one wanted to give voice to this underlying conflict, until, in the sixth session, Ruth decides to take the risk. In challenging Jake, Ruth also challenges the present status quo and calls for a new form of leadership, a new way of doing things. She is attempting to energize the group in a new direction, to reframe the problem that they are facing, and to help them out of their entrenchment. Her voice is one of outrage, anguish, and anger. She is asking the group to join her in a struggle for a new order. Ruth is much like the hero in analytical psychology and mythology, who stands very much alone in the face of the collectivity, staring into the mouth of the dragon. She is a spokesperson for increased consciousness and further differentiation. Like the hero, however, she is 'devoured' by the social system. She returns, in her silence, to the matrix of the social system's collective unconscious.

This segment represents the emergence of a focal person who articulates the unconscious concerns of the social system. In return, the social system rewards her by further alienating and psychologically isolating her in the group. Thus, the consequences of focal person behavior are

not always positive, either for the individual and/or the social system. The case example illustrates the immense struggle that is sometimes faced by the focal person and the social system as they attempt to deal with the challenge the focal person presents. Typically, the social system is increasingly faced with the decision to either move forward in the direction called for by the focal person or retreat further into a deeper entrenchment. Considerable tension and anxiety will surround this situation as the focal person increasingly challenges the social system to adopt a new way of seeing – a new level of awareness and consciousness. At some point, the social system will then either decide to move forward or to stay where it is and, thereby, retreat. Clearly, the latter alternative is the route taken by the social system in the case example.

In summary, a principal quality of the focal person concept is the fact that it is not a property of any one individual or individuals but, rather, an aspect of the transaction between the social and personality systems of the group (Boyd, 1983, 1984). An individual acts and the social system responds and in that transaction lies the phenomenon of the focal person. The three case examples demonstrate that the focal person concept is characterized by three principal functions. One function is to represent the unconscious concerns of the social system. These concerns are emotional in nature and involve archetypal material. They are manifest in feelings, thoughts, and actions which seem opposing, contradictory, and irreconcilable. In these case studies, we have concentrated on archetypal paradoxes which evolve out of the archetype of the Great Mother, but additional archetypal paradoxes involving the Father, the Hero, and the Captive and the Treasure (Neumann, 1954) are also possible. These paradoxes reflect a sense of entrenchment that comes to pervade the social system around issues of group development and transformation. They are inevitable markers in the path of the evolving social system. The second function that the focal person serves is to critique the status quo and to challenge the members to a new way of seeing. This function involves a 'reframing' of the situation that has led to or produced the paradox (Smith and Berg, 1987), so that, out of the apparent opposition springs the possibility for new life and energy. The critique sets the stage for the third function of the focal person, that of the voice of transformation. This is an energizing function, in which the focal person seeks to move the social system to a new order or a new way of doing things, in other words a new society.

Summary and conclusion

The focus of this chapter has been on developing a more adequate conceptual understanding of the individual who comes to occupy special and symbolic positions of influence in small, face-to-face groups. That

is, certain individuals at certain times in the group's development, sometimes overtly but usually covertly, serve to focus attention on the underlying, unconscious concerns of the social system of the group. We refer to this general phenomenon as the 'influential member'. Within the last 40 years, scholars of small group behavior have identified a number of different forms. As we demonstrated in a critical review of this literature, these various concepts have underscored the importance of viewing group phenomena from a symbolic perspective. In addition, this research has identified several different functions that the influential member may serve in the process of group development. None of these prior concepts, however, provides an adequate conceptual basis for linking the phenomenon of the influential member with the dynamics of the social system. We are left with several different versions of the influential member, some of which appear to be the consequences of conservative and defensive functions of the social system, while others suggest a more active role in group development and transformation. A more comprehensive and theoretically inclusive concept is needed which can conceptually unify these various functions and which can help us better understand how and why these individuals assume the significance that they do to the social system of the group.

The focal person concept was proposed as a way of filling this theoretical gap in the group literature. Based on the theoretical framework of analytical psychology, the focal person concept aims to help understand and interpret the behavior of certain influential members within a framework of group transformation. The notion of archetypal paradox was advanced as the group context in which the focal person emerges. Within the period of the archetypal paradox, the focal person serves to crystallize and to name the sense of the entrenchment that members feel and the unconscious concerns that are at the core of the archetypal paradox, to challenge and to critique the present order of things, and/or to energize the group toward transformation of the social order. Through these three key functions, the focal person facilitates a re-framing of the group's situation and movement through the paradox. The emergence of a focal person, however, does not always result in positive, transformative consequences for the social system. As was clearly evident in the last case example, the social system may be viciously resistant to the voice of the focal person, who often, in situations like this, succumbs to a psychological fate not unlike that of the hero in Greek mythology.

The work presented in this chapter offers a somewhat different and conceptually more comprehensive perspective for viewing and understanding the particular individual-group relationship reflected in the focal person phenomenon. From our own observational studies, the focal person concept has been shown to be a useful way of

conceptualizing certain manifestations of influential members. This research (Dirkx, 1987; Myers, 1986) demonstrates that focal person phenomena are clearly associated with periods of group paradox and transformation. Additional observational research, however, will be necessary to corroborate the conceptual relationships inherent in this perspective. The extent to which this association is exclusive remains to be determined. That is, are there other periods in the social system that are not explicitly paradoxical or transformative in which focal persons are present? Additional studies are needed to address this question.

There are several other questions that remain to be clarified by future studies as well. For example, why do particular individuals seem to occupy the role of focal person? Is there something in the psychological nature of these individuals that social systems find more 'suitable' for this role than others in the group? We can find a partial theoretical answer in the notion of collective projective identification. Empirical studies of this phenomenon, however, are needed to help us better understand the nature of the individual-group relationship that constitutes focal person activity within periods of group paradox. Previous research has introduced such possibilities as an implicit congruence between the ambivalence of the focal person toward the archetypal material constituting the paradox and the ambivalence of the social system towards this material (Dirkx, 1987). More work, however, is needed to bring these ideas beyond the speculative stage.

Another important line of research in the focal person concept is to comprehensively describe the nature of the archetypal paradoxes in which this phenomenon plays a part. In this chapter, we discussed the focal person within the archetypal paradox of the group as both a good mother and a bad mother, the archetype fundamental to the matriarchal stage of consciousness. Based on Neumann's (1954) work, we would anticipate similar group behavior around the different phases of archetypal development, including that of the Great Father, the Hero, and the Captive and the Treasure.

The work presented here provides a sound, theoretical grounding for interpreting the behavior of influential group members. As the preceding discussion demonstrates, however, considerable work remains to corroborate and refine this concept. The research so far, however, provides some implications for those who facilitate small face-to-face groups over time in various settings. Identifying the phenomenon of the influential member as focal person also identifies latent, unconscious concerns of the social system. Often, groups get stuck and bogged down with little understanding of the real reason why they are stuck. Looking to and understanding the voice of the focal person as a symbolic voice of the social system may help facilitators be in a better position to assist the group through its 'stuckness' and toward transformation.

Related to the perspective of the focal person as a symbolic representation of the unconscious concerns of the social system is the notion that focal person activity is an indication of underlying transformative processes in the group. An influential member acting as a focal person is a suggestion that the transformative impulses of the social system are making themselves heard and seen. The focal person can draw attention to the archetypal paradox, which, in turn, can help facilitators better understand the specific direction that the transformation will take.

In this regard, the group paradox is not unlike psychological crises, which are inevitable but crucial periods of transformation in the lives of individuals (Erikson, 1950). Future research and application of the focal person concept will help us better understand and facilitate groups through these predictable periods of opposing and conflicting forces and feelings of entrenchment. It provides researchers, group facilitators, and group members with one perspective for making sense of the difficult and usually painful process of group transformation.

The painful process of group transformation is characteristic of personal transformations. It is difficult generally for social systems and individuals to give up what they now know and believe they can handle and move onto something new, and perhaps something they may not be able to handle as well. This is even the case when the present situation is unsatisfactory and even painful. We had often observed this in the life of a small group. Myers (1986) undertook the leadership in developing a methodology for the study of this phenomenon. It paralleled the characteristics of grief work in cases of bereavement and therefore it seemed reasonable to stay with the term. Not only do individuals give evidence of experiencing grief in making major changes in their lives but the social system in its own ways appeared to manifest a form of grief work. The methodology which was developed allowed us to study the social system in transition through what we came to call social grieving. The following chapter presents the methodology for the study of social grieving.

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John M. Dirkx

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Chapter four

Grief work

A social dynamic in group transitions

J. Gordon Myers and Robert D. Boyd

In previous chapters we have discussed the archetypal themes which describe the sequential phases of group development. This chapter presents a way of looking at the transitions occurring between phases in group development.

We explain this in-between period as one of social grieving. Traditionally, grieving has been associated with the death of a loved one. Here grieving, conceptualized within the Jungian framework of death and rebirth, is made explicit in its application to transitions within the social systems of small groups.

The chapter will include five sections: (1) the rationale for studying grieving as a phenomenon occurring within the social system from the perspective of analytical psychology; (2) the theoretical basis for the framework presented in this chapter; (3) a description of the categories used to identify the manifestation of social grieving within a group transition; (4) a report on an empirical study designed to test the feasibility and validity of the methodology; (5) a presentation and discussion of the findings from the study.

Social grieving from the perspective of analytical psychology

Following the publication of the Matrix Model (Boyd, 1983, 1984), our initial work was primarily focused on determining its structural validity. Much of this work involved conducting empirical studies to test the existence of phase development in the identity and reality-adaptive realms. The problem was not investigating the basic idea of phase development, as this phenomenon is a widely recognized and accepted fact. The focus of our research studies investigated the existence of sequential sets of developmental phases which described the identity and reality-adaptive realms of a small group. It was not until later, after empirical evidence accumulated to corroborate the existence of these realms, that the question of transitional phenomena between phases

arose. The question can be put in the following way: How does the transition occur from one group phase to the next?

The above account of our research would give the impression that our work progresses in an orderly manner where leaps of insights and intuition are not admitted. This is far from being the case and the present study is such an example. It was during that period when Boyd was working on archetypal phases in the small group that Myers observed that some group phenomena had similar configurations to processes of grieving that individuals experience with the death of a loved one. Our efforts were then divided between the two lines of research. The notion was formulated, after extensive discussions and reflections on group observations, that a group's transition from one developmental phase to the next was accomplished through grief work. It was at this point that the study was formally undertaken to determine if the transition processes between phases could be characterized as grief work.

The notion that a small group is an entity was discussed fully in Chapter One and will not be gone into again at this point. The significance of this idea, however, is critical to the type of phenomena that is under study and the manner in which observational categories are specified. We view grieving as an existential quality of human existence. Not only do individuals grieve, but also a small group, a social collectivity, and a society can be observed grieving on occasions of significant loss. We have taken this observation further, as a means to explain the developmental transitions in small groups. This explanation was then set as the conjecture to be tested empirically.

Placing grieving, or what we have come to speak of as social grieving, in the context of group development can be explained most adequately in the premisses of analytical psychology. The movement of a group from one phase to the next sequential phase has the basic qualities of a transformation. The small group, as a social entity, moves from one state of being to another state which is based on some resolution of the former, and in turn it then has to deal with more complex issues. For example, the crisis of Autonomy vs. Shame/Doubt arises with the group's resolution of the crisis of Trust vs. Mistrust and the group issues and problems that then become the agendas of the group reflect the content of both stages. To stay with the example, when a group after much anguish has come to a resolution of the crisis of Trust vs. Mistrust, there is little enthusiasm initially to take on something new. There is a comfortable feeling in the group to stay where it is. In Jung's terms there has been a 'rebirth' from a 'death' but that transformation must invariably lead to the next life problem. Life does not stand still for an individual nor for a small group. That emotion of loss or moving out of a given state of being is a basic quality of a transformation. It is this

quality of transformations, to a large extent, that identifies them as involving social grieving processes.

We took as our premiss that the transition between group phases was a transformation, the type Jung (1969) labelled as the 'expansion of consciousness'. Having established that as the conceptual basis for our study, we were then in a position to examine the merits of the notion of grieving as the manifest expression of transformations as experienced by the social system of a small group.

The theoretical basis for the framework

The intention of this chapter is not to pursue the work that has been done to establish the existence of the social system or that this social system may change, progress, or regress in patterned ways over time. We start this study from that point where the social system and phase development in groups are taken as given. Starting from that point our focus is to examine the social processes which enable the social system to successfully move from one phase of development to the next. Here it is asserted that the key to whether or not successful phase movement occurs depends in part upon the ability of the social system to facilitate its own grief work.

Grieving

A developmental crisis within the social system of a group specifically means that the social system's present stage of development is no longer adequate to the life of the group; the way the group has until now come to identify itself seems no longer to have relevance. A de-mythologizing of the status quo is underway, and an almost involuntary disruption of order is taking place. Faced with the existential necessity to change from within, the social system attempts to conserve what has been while coming to terms with the entrance of what will be. In struggling to come to grips with this developmental moment, the group's social system confronts loss. This phenomenon clearly parallels the processes of grieving that individuals experience as a result of the loss of a loved one. The psychological processes of adjusting to loss as described by Parkes (1972) and others provided an analogous account of the turmoil which we had observed in small groups during transitional periods. This insight lead us to propose the notion that social systems struggle through the stages of grief work in leaving one developmental phase in order to achieve the next.

Experiences of grief are evoked when the social system's ability to continue the established pattern of meaning is threatened and

discontinuity is becoming more apparent than continuity. Grieving results from the exchange being made between the social system's prior and predictable way of interpreting reality and its not-yet, unpredictable future way. Grieving results from the classic conflict between conservation and innovation.

Grief, then, writes Peter Marris (1974, p. 28), is the

expression of a profound conflict between contradictory impulses - to consolidate all that is still valuable and important in the past, and preserve it from loss; and at the same time, to re-establish a meaningful pattern of relationships, in which the loss is accepted. Each impulse checks the other, reasserting itself by painful stabs of actuality or remorse, and recalling the bereaved to face the conflict itself.

In the small group setting, grieving becomes the vehicle, the social system's best hope for ensuring continuity when the familiar patterns of operation are irretrievably broken. Potentially grief becomes a transporting process through which the group's social system may eventually arrive at its next stage of development.

The social system, therefore, is challenged to work through the loss, the disintegration of its former level of maturity. Grieving enables the social system to abstract from its past what was fundamentally of value, reconstitute that prized tradition, and reintegrate it into the present in a way that brings new meaning based on a new interpretation of its own identity as a System (Marris, 1974; Myers, 1986).

Grieving - a psychoanalytic perspective, 1900-1960

Principally because of the ground breaking work of Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, Erich Lindemann, and Edith Jacobson, the processes of grieving can now be studied as a sequence of subjective states which follow upon the experience of loss. Prior to Freud in particular, grieving was approached by studying depressive illness and melancholia in adults (Bowlby, 1975).

The psychical task of grieving outlined by Freud prior to 1920 focuses primarily upon detachment from what is no longer. This detachment, he asserts, sets in motion 'grave departures from the normal attitude to life' (1917, pp. 243-44). According to Freud (1917), these departures represent major characteristics commonly found in bereaved persons: profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of a capacity to love, and inhibition of activity.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, Melanie Klein (1936) advanced a process perspective to the conversation by seeing grieving as a

movement, accompanied by fear and guilt, from disorganization to reorganization. For her, the bereaved's task is to reestablish and re-integrate certain critical links with one's inner and outer world.

Edith Jacobson (1946), building on Melanie Klein, offers 'yearning for the past' as a further characteristic of grieving and suggests that the quality and texture of attachment to the lost relationship strongly condition mourning. In addition, she distinguishes between normal and pathological grieving based on the presence or absence of aggression.

Finally, Erich Lindemann's (1944) research and writing was especially significant for two reasons. First, his systematic study called attention to the array of responses to loss both in content and in process. He postulated that characteristics of mourning vary in intensity of appearance as well as in the timing of the procedure itself. Second, Lindemann's careful testing of experience provided the psychoanalytic community with confirmation of prior conjectures.

Until the 1950s, the study of depression made an occasional reference to grief work. Currently, however, it is not uncommon to consider depression as an integral part of a much larger affective process called grieving or mourning (Bowlby, 1980). Healthy grieving processes are now viewed as instrumental in affecting a withdrawal of emotional concern from a lost relationship (Marris, 1974). The foregoing historical views regarding the task of grieving, its process, characteristics, and idiosyncratic tendencies need to be brought forward into contemporary psychoanalytic thought which introduces a developmental perspective on grieving.

The developmental perspective on grieving

John Bowlby, a British psychiatrist, writing some 40 years after Freud's contributions on mourning and 15 years after Lindemann's research, finds grief to be 'a peculiar amalgam of anxiety, anger, and despair following the experience of what is feared to be an irretrievable loss' (1961, p. 16). He observed that letting go of the old, the what-has-been, in order to make room for the new, the what-will-be, is a painful if not dangerous task for human beings.

The loss of a love-object, Bowlby asserts, unleashes a sequence of behaviors which is varied and yet predictable. This behavioral sequence embodies initial feelings of anxiety and anger, followed by pain and despair, and eventually resolved into hope. This movement may oscillate violently at times; yet, according to Bowlby, a plainly observable movement can be discerned from protest through despair to some new equilibrium of feeling and behavior.

In Bowlby's studies (1961), grieving has an observable movement or predictable sequence of adaptive processes which fall into three distinct

phases: (1) the urge to recover the lost object; (2) disorganization and disintegration; and (3) reorganization.

During phase one, the mourning person's response systems are strenuously centered upon the lost object while making oftentimes anger-filled efforts to recover it. Moreover, these efforts may continue, even though their fruitlessness is painfully evident to others and sometimes even to the grieving person. Blameful anger, directed toward the lost object, toward others, and even toward oneself, is unleashed during this initial phase. It is as if once the villain is found and punished, in a miraculous way the loss shall be recovered. Pining for the past becomes a form of denial, a resistance to acknowledging a union now broken. For Bowlby, then, 'repeated disappointment, weeping, anger, accusation and ingratitude are all features of the first phase of mourning, and are to be understood as expressions of the urge to recover the lost object' (1961, pp. 18-19).

When the momentum and movement of grieving continues with integrity, these response systems gradually surrender their attention to, and volatile search for, the lost object. The resulting surrender issues in phase two, which is characterized by the disorganization of personality accompanied by pain and despair (1961). The accumulated disappointments of phase one have taken their toll as hope of reunion fades and the past slips away. The attempts at fabricating what no longer exists give way to despair as the person's behavior becomes disorganized. Bowlby cites Lindemann's graphic description:

There is restlessness, inability to sit still, moving about in an aimless fashion, continually searching for something to do. . . . (A)ctivities do not proceed in the automatic, self-sustaining fashion which characterizes normal work . . . There is . . . a painful lack of capacity to initiate and maintain organized patterns of behavior.

(1961, p. 19)

Bowlby's basic concept of depression is critical to an understanding of his concept of grieving. For Bowlby, disorientation, at times verging on feelings of disintegration, is critical in dealing with loss; it signals depression, distinct from depressive illness, as the essence of the subjective state of phase two. He suggests that depression in grieving is relevant to other situations as well. 'In addition to our behavior being organized toward the maintenance of certain libidinal relationships, much of it is concerned with the reaching of work or recreational goals' (1961, p. 20).

When these interchanges between self and world, so necessary to goal-oriented achievement, are terminated, depression occurs. The termination may be due as much to what may have been gained as to what may have been lost when the goal having been successfully reached is

now relegated to the past. 'No matter what the causes', asserts Bowlby, 'until such time as new patterns of inter-change have become organized towards a new object or goal we experience restlessness or apathy, with concurrent anxiety and depression' (1961, p. 20).

Bowlby's insight is that the depressive phase of grieving results from the disorganization of behavior patterns which in turn originate in any significant loss in the internal world of feelings or the external world of objects and goals. As an inescapable aspect of life, depression in grieving is normal.

Moreover, the behavioral processes which accompany depression are not only normal but also play an adaptive role. Human development – new linkages established with objects and goals – requires that inappropriate present linkages be broken down. Bowlby summarizes his view by drawing an analogy with a child at play:

Just as a child playing with Meccano must destroy his construction before he can use the pieces again . . . so must the individual each time he is bereaved or relinquishes a major goal accept the destruction of a part of his personality before he can organize it afresh toward a new object or goal. Although unwelcome, such phases are a necessary part of being alive.

(1961, p. 21)

As a footnote to the point and most germane to this study, Bowlby draws attention to learning:

'The painfulness of new ideas and our habitual resistance to them can also be seen in this context. The more far-reaching a new idea is the more disorganization of existing theoretical systems has to be tolerated before a new better synthesis of old and new can be achieved.

(1961, p. 21)

Accordingly, phase two of the grieving process is disorganization of personality, accompanied by feelings of pain and despair and behaviors which portray withdrawal and chaos. In short, it is the phase characterized by depression.

Phase three, much less dramatic and thereby more difficult to describe, is called 'reorganization as adaptive processes'. This is the transitional phase to recovery 'during which reorganization takes place partly in connection with the image of the lost object and partly in connection with a new object or objects' (Bowlby, 1961, p. 21). To the degree that the relationship with the lost object has been restructured, the person experiences the final phase of grieving; in so far as a new object(s) has been discovered, the person enters into a new object relationship.

By restructuring, Bowlby means that over time the person in mourning is able to distinguish between those patterns of thinking,

feeling, and behaving which are clearly no longer appropriate and those which can remain with integrity. The widow cited by Lindemann as saying; 'I used to put the kettle on and make tea for him. Or when I'd come home and find him not there, I'd think he had just gone out' (1944, p. 145), clearly articulates the patterns which must be allowed to fade. On the other hand, mourners who over time are able to abstract or bring forward those values and ways of being in-the-world which originated or developed in and through the relationship now lost have successfully identified the patterns which can persevere with integrity. By remaining bonded in this way, without seriously distorting reality, the lost love relationship is able to flourish anew (Bowlby, 1961).

John Bowlby's contribution stands firmly on the shoulders of those students of psychology before him who concerned themselves with understanding grief. Bowlby builds on their effort by carefully nuancing the phases of grieving, distinguishing depression in mourning from depressive illness, as well as by expanding the human context of what occasions grieving. In turn his work has been carried forward under the guidance of a British social psychiatrist, Colin Murray Parkes, whose enquiries into grieving have been conducted at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, London.

In the foreword to Colin Murray Parkes's book, *Bereavement: Studies of grief in adult life*, John Bowlby cites Parkes for giving 'attention equally to the promotion of scientific understanding [regarding grieving] and to the development of professional skills based upon it' (1987, p. 8). Parkes set out to investigate the typical shape of grief. Standing with Bowlby, he attempts to move the study of grieving out of the realm of physical and mental illness and into the life fabric of healthy human existence.

The study which proved most useful to our efforts at conceptualizing grieving was the study Parkes conducted with 22 widows in Boston. Each widow participated in a standardized interview at least five times in the 13 months following the death of her husband. By means of this longitudinal strategy, information was then systematically gathered regarding the process of grieving and its phase development over time (Parkes, 1975).

Parkes sees the movement of grief from one phase to the next as rarely distinct; also, he points out that characteristics common to a former phase may persist into a later phase. In general, though, Parkes's findings confirm Bowlby's in terms of the phasic process of grief. However, he identifies four phases of grieving to Bowlby's three (1972).

The additional phase comes at the beginning of grieving and is characterized by a state of numbness which gives way at times to outbursts of extreme behavior or 'panic attacks'. One of the widows studied said: 'I felt numb and solid for a week. . . . Everything goes hard

inside you . . . like a heavy weight.' Several times during her first month of grieving, another woman ran out of her home panic stricken and took refuge with friends next door. She described herself during this period as so fragile that 'if somebody gave me a good tap I'd shatter into a thousand pieces. . . . I felt desperate' (Parkes, 1970, p. 65).

Parkes summarized his findings for phase one:

Episodes of panic or distress alternate with longer periods of numbness or restless 'busyness'. Feelings are seldom admitted fully to as overwhelming or as harming . . . the very fact of the loss is commonly avoided in one way or another.

(1970, p. 65)

This identification of an initial phase of grief seemed so sound to John Bowlby that he later revised his classifications to bring them into harmony with Parkes's conclusions (Bowlby, 1980).

According to Parkes, phase two of grieving is like phase one in that it is situated along a continuum of feeling; however, in phase two the movement is from 'yearning' at the one end to 'protest' at the other end.

Yearning and protest both represent consequences of the emerging conflict of phase two: searching for the lost object (holding onto the past) versus letting-go of inappropriate behavior (being open to the full reality of the present). For Parkes, this characteristic searching is exemplified in its four components. The first component is 'pining and preoccupation with thoughts of the deceased person'. This represents the key sign that grieving is taking place; it stands as the central and pathognomic feature of grief. Second, those in mourning focus their attention toward places and objects which are associated with the lost person. Third, there emerges a 'mind set' for what has been lost so that the grieving person attends to those stimuli which suggest the continued presence of the lost object while ignoring those stimuli which contradict that presence. The fourth component is weeping, accompanied by a growing degree of restlessness. Tearfulness is interpreted by Parkes as both an attempt to reunite with the lost object and to reach out for help. The accompanying restlessness develops into frustration and anger and becomes a demonstration of protest in this phase (Parkes, 1970).

Protest, which falls at the far end of the continuum for phase two, is described as general irritability or bitterness. Anger directed toward self, usually present as guilt; anger toward others for rather slight offenses; even anger toward the deceased - 'Why did he do this to me?' - all appear during this phase. Parkes claims that protest is commonly associated with the general feeling that the world has become an 'insecure and potentially dangerous place'. Exaggerated protest or irrational anger flows from the 'sense of insecurity and frustration

[resulting] from the loss of a major source of support, [and] the wish to bring under control the impersonal destructive events of the bereavement.' (1972, p. 71).

Over time, as pining and protest diminish and each pattern of inappropriate behavior is confronted with reality and thereby recognized as useless, a period of uncertainty, drifting, and apathy follows. Parkes agrees with Bowlby in calling this third phase disorganization and despair. The characteristic emotion is depression which Parkes treats in like manner to Bowlby (Parkes, 1972).

Phase four involves gaining a new identity, which means 'learning new solutions and finding new ways to predict and control happenings within the life-space. It also means seeking a fresh place in the hierarchy, [which involves] reassessing one's powers and possessions, and finding out how one is viewed by the rest of the world' (1972, pp. 104-5). Thus the old ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving, those prior assumptions now judged as inappropriate and unnecessary, are surrendered, the individual is free to 'take stock and to make a new start'. As certain assumptions from the past are judged ineffective in the present, the person's old identity or prior way of seeing self and the world dissolves and is gradually replaced by a different identity.

For Parkes, then, phase four emanates from a back and forth movement which on the one hand involves directly attacking the problem through painful reality testing, while on the other postpones one's search for identity and meaning. The former enhances perception and thought regarding one's past, present, and future, while the latter provides a harbor for rest and safety.

What is it that allows a person to journey successfully through the pain of the first three phases to the successful resolution of grief and the hope-filled arrival at phase four? Parkes (1972) answers this question by proposing that mitigation, or more specifically mitigating elements or defense mechanisms, trigger intermittent remissions from the pain of grief.

These elements or positive, enabling forces housed within phases one through three are used to bracket the full reality of loss, to suspend belief if only for a moment. A more common term for mitigation is defense; for Parkes, some elements of defense are essential 'in helping [the person] to regulate the quantity of novel, unorganized, or in other respects disabling information an individual is handling at a given time' (1970, p. 74). In a sense, such mitigating factors as denial, loss of feeling, dreaming, selective forgetting, continuing to feel the presence of the lost person, and withdrawal all serve as problem-solving devices. They buy time; more especially they enable appropriate distancing from potential danger and enhance a person's tolerance for biting sorrow. In this way they form a strategy for survival and for growth.

With Parkes's contribution, the portrait of the grieving person has come into sharper focus. His work has expanded our understanding. The physical and emotional reactions, the development of a maturing identity, the search for meaning, the attempts to avoid reality, and the gradual building up of a new sense of an ego-self relationship are principal elements of grieving.

Concluding comment

Considering the attention given to the subject of grief work by Freud over 60 years ago, coupled with the classical research study by Lindemann some 40 years ago, it still remains a puzzle that the psychoanalytic community has not focused more interest upon grief as a major mental health hazard and perhaps more significantly a universal basis for personal growth and development. With the contributions of John Bowlby and Colin Murray Parkes, much of that oversight has been addressed.

It should also be noted that a significant amount of empirical research has been conducted on the theory of grieving and its critical role in personal and social change. These studies have proceeded in two directions: (1) to extend the concept of loss beyond separation from concrete attachments (for example, the death of a loved one) to include situations that fundamentally involve the anticipated or actual invalidation of central assumptions and interpretations about the way the world in which the individual lives really works (Carr, 1975; Marris, 1974; Myers, 1986; Weinstein and Platt, 1973); and (2) to extend the understanding of grief reactions beyond the proximate time of loss to several years beyond the loss. A variety of studies have found evidence of loss and grief reactions among individuals in such disparate situations as urban relocation and immigration (Fried, 1963; Marris, 1974).

These and other studies have not been reported in detail here because the primary intent was to conceptualize grieving as it applies to the phase development of a small group's social system. The works of Bowlby and Parkes were seen as contributing most significantly to that end. The major task was to discern from their work a sequence of portraits, which portray a group's social system in transit from one phase of its development to the next. This has been accomplished and is discussed in the next section of this chapter. Further documentation of Bowlby's and of Parkes's work through the detailed discussion of other related empirical investigations has not been attempted in this chapter. It is noted that further studies do exist and a rich source of these is found in *The place of attachment in human behavior* by Parkes and Stevenson-Hinde (1982), *Holding on or letting go* by Osherson (1980), and *Loss and change* by Marris (1974).

as if the group were anesthetized. Activity appears to be automatic; the social system seems dazed and distant as if what is going on simply is not registering, not getting through. The group seems to be waiting endlessly for something to happen. This emotionally blank period, however, oscillates with outbursts of panic-laden activity. In a highly scattered way, the group communicates a sense of dashing about, attempting in vain to fill up its life with operations. Whether the group is in a place of dullness or compulsively moving about in a panic-stricken way, the unreality is apparent – the group appears suspended in time.

This phase of grieving is illustrated in the following description of a small group's interactions. Certain topics had been proposed as possible group agendas during the first hour of the group. None of them appeared to capture the interest of the members. Although they continued to talk about the merits of pursuing these topics the group was unable to decide on any one with any sense of commitment. A member, appearing to be joking, described their indecision as the tyranny of democracy. The awkward laughter that followed his comment gave further evidence that the group was waiting for the designated leader to take over the direction of the group – a role he had stated at the outset he was not going to take. The members were unable to accept this role and continued to believe that their helplessness would have him give up this 'experimental project' and become what a leader should be. Although he apparently heard their appeal there was no indication in his behavior that he was going to assume direction for the group. Following this incident the energy seemed to have gone out of the group. Although the members were obviously disappointed and angry at the leader they did not openly express these feelings, rather they became restless. This period was followed by some members proposing activities which were clearly of the nature of busy work. The task before the social system was to recognize and give up its culture of dependency – a task it was finding difficult to accept.

The six descriptions which follow provide anchoring terms that portray the group during this first phase of grieving:

- a restless almost hyperactive busyness
- avoidance of feelings
- a loss of the traditional pattern of relating (e.g. How do you behave toward an authority figure who acts as if he does not have authority?)
- a loss of energy
- a feeling that the system has shut down due to a severe blow
- a shocked sense of sudden calamity (e.g. If we give up our culture of dependency, we will surely have chaos.)

Phase two

Pining

and

Protest

The second phase of the process of social grieving within the group as a whole is similar to the first in that a rhythmical movement is also present. During the second phase, however, the oscillation is between a painful pining or yearning for that which has been lost and protest that the loss should have occurred. The anger seen during this phase expresses itself as irritability and bitterness and is not as acute as the aggression which emerges during the next phase.

In viewing the social system at this point, an observer may note an apparent preoccupation with what has been in the group's social realm and an attempt to search for and cling to a lost object. The social system seems to have lost its home and wishes painfully to return to it. Finding itself in a strange environment, the social system repeatedly circles back over earlier experiences of its life, as if this scanning will keep alive the hope of finding the safe place of an earlier time.

Frustration emerges as the social system remains unsuccessful in its search. Often blame results as the impression is given that it is someone's fault; someone is responsible for this loss. During this phase, the theme of protest is most clearly exhibited by the group appearing to be furious with both the leader and with itself.

An example of this phase of grieving occurring within the social system of a group is given in the following account. The group had established the Good Mother as the predominant theme of the social system. It had spent two full sessions enjoying the warmth and general sustenance that is provided by this theme. There has arisen, however, a movement toward the claiming of autonomy for the group. The social system appears to be torn between returning to the sense of security experienced with the Good Mother theme and moving on to the challenges perceived in the next developmental stage. There is a yearning to go back and at the same time a protest that attempts to deny the reality that returning to what has been is impractical. Some members expressed the feeling of sadness – of having left something behind that is very dear to them. This characterized the social system, as did the criticism made of Professor B's metaphors which the members saw as negative comments on the group's achievements. They blamed themselves for listening to his metaphors and they blamed him for his destructive interventions.

The six descriptions which follow capture the essential nature of grieving in the second phase:

- an unfulfilled searching which leads to frustration and then anger
- a yearning for the past

- a hollow emptiness
- a need to blame
- a painful wishing to have something restored
- endless legitimizing of prior group experiences.

Phase three

Disorganization and Despair

The third phase of the process of social grieving is characterized by an oscillating movement from disorganization to despair. The group's social system appears disoriented in its mode of operation. Earlier attempts at sustained activities have proved disappointing; present attempts at initiating systematic patterns of industry have collapsed; activities no longer build one from another. Despairing that anything worthwhile can come from the present endeavors, the social system appears on the verge of collapse. A climate of apathy and depression abounds.

In this phase we observe the group as a social system expressing grieving as in the following case study. The group appeared unable to return to the theme of the Good Mother yet equally unable to move to the next theme of the Separation of the Great Parents. From another perspective, the group from the vantage point of the social system had felt good about the establishment of Trust in the group but now to move onto Autonomy vs. Shame/Doubt appeared as yet an impossible task. In the face of this inertia the group vacillated between the expression of disorganization on the one hand and despair on the other.

Certain key phrases may serve to identify a general portrait of the social system within the third phase of grieving;

- painful disappointment
- boredom
- a mood of despair
- a feeling of collapse
- unexpressed anger
- depression.

Phase four

Restabilization and Reintegration

Phase four of social grieving emerges from the psychological struggles toward reintegration resulting in the reformulation of meaning and social identity coming out of phases one through three. The rhythmical movement of phase four is between a hope-filled sense of recovery based on a reconstruction of meaning and a reorganization of task procedures and ways of being together as a social system. If the group

has been able to tolerate the extreme buffeting of emotion, the seemingly endless searching and reexamining, the prolonged frustration which at times has broken out into feelings of anger and depression, then gradually it also becomes able to recognize and to accept the loss of its prior existential structure. In this phase previous patterns and social modes that had governed and directed behavior have been recognized and accepted as now being inappropriate for present actions and the resolution of immediate issues and agendas. An integration of what has been with what now must be ushers in a new formulation of meaning. A new social system, restructured from its past, comes into being as it defines the issues of its new crisis.

Such a development is described in the following account. There had been a sense that the group had not been getting anywhere during its last three sessions. Some members who appeared to be voicing the quality of the group's life talked about it as being analogous to the play *Waiting for Godot*. In the initial period of the following session the discussion went back to their reference to the play. In the discussion which followed there began to appear, slowly at first, but steadily growing, a firmer conviction both in the way the members were beginning to express their ideas and to what was being shared. The discussion was dealing with power, who had it and who could exercise it in the life of a small group. It dealt with commitment to oneself and to others as a way to express autonomy. This was the manifest content and the latent content was a clear reintegration of the social structure as a social force. As a group, they could direct their lives and the leader had power over the group only to the extent that the social system would allow and they were the social system. The reintegration of the social system empowered the membership. Their struggles through the phases of grieving had given to the social system a new mode of operating and to each member a personal transformation.

The six descriptions which follow accurately portray the social system of a group during this fourth phase of grieving:

- a deepened investment
- a mood of hope-filled optimism
- a sense of togetherness
- a renewed sense of meaning and purpose
- action under the guidance of a new awareness
- action on the basis of a new identity.

A concluding note

Special attention must be given to the rhythmical movement among the four phases of grieving. This movement, called oscillation, is observed

not only within the various phases but between the phases as well. To say that four phases of grieving may be observed is not to say that all four appear one at a time and always in a sequential order in their initial expression. Overlapping does occur between phases, and one phase may loop back over a prior phase before moving to the next phase. The phases do have an ascending period which marks their sequential pattern. Our observations have thus suggested the conjecture that for a small group's social system to successfully move from one stage of development to the next all four phases must be negotiated.

An empirical study

Our aim from the outset had been to test our work empirically. There were two interrelated questions to which we sought answers. First, did social grieving occur in small groups as we had proposed in our schema? The answer to this question depended upon demonstrating that knowledgeable observers could identify the categories of grieving as they occurred in a small group. Second, were the group transitions or phases of group development associated with the phase sequence of social grieving? Whether we would pursue this second question would be determined by the findings of our first enquiry. With these questions before us, our next step was to design an empirical study to obtain answers to the questions which have been posed.

The group selected was a self-study group. Several such groups have been conducted in our Group Dynamics Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the one chosen for this project was composed of nine women and three men. The group met for ten weekly sessions each two and a half hours in length. The leader took a non-directive role which is described in some detail in a later chapter. His interventions did not address the processes of social grieving and none of the literature describing the course would have alerted the members to these processes and the nature of the study that was being conducted. All of the sessions were videotaped and these were to be used later as the data base for the study.

The video tapes were to be analyzed for two types of data. First, it was necessary to determine whether there were times in the life of the group when group transitions or group phase developments occurred. Determining the presence of group transitions was a critical step if we were to test the conjecture that social grieving was associated with periods of group phase development. Second, the video tapes would then be analyzed to determine whether the phases of social grieving were in evidence. The achievement of these tasks depended upon coders who had to be adequately trained to meet the requirements for the study. There were two sets of coders – one set determined the existence of

phases of group development; the other set determined the phases of social grieving.

The methodology for coding phases of group development has been used in many studies that have been conducted in the Group Dynamics Laboratory. The methodology follows the general format of delineating the characteristics of the various phases and then the coder employs these specifications to differentiate and identify the particular phase the group is in at a given time. The reader is referred to studies by Boyd *et al.* (1980), White (1976), and Davie (1971). The coders were tested on their knowledge of the methodology and on inter-coder reliability. The coders, after a training period, demonstrated that they had met the standards which were set for this methodology.

Once it was demonstrated that the two coders who were to analyze the video tapes for phases of group development had achieved an acceptable level of competency they were given the task of coding the entire ten sessions of the study. Tests of reliability were conducted systematically throughout their work of coding the sessions. Their coding of the sessions identified occurrences of group phase development. Having established the existence of transition periods, the conditions were present to test for phases of social grieving. The question could now be posed: Were the four phases of social grieving associated with the transitions which had been observed in the phase development of the group?

To answer that question it was necessary to apply the coding procedure to the video tapes of the sessions to determine the existence of social grieving. The first task then became the training of coders in the social grieving methodology. Two graduate students were chosen who were unaware of the nature of the study and who, during the course of the study, were only aware of their role in the study. As was the case with the coders of phase development, every effort was made to avoid indicating that there was a progressive sequence to the phases. Specific series of steps were taken in the training of coders (Myers, 1986). At the end of the training period they were tested against the standards set as the accepted level of performance. As part of that procedure, an inter-coder reliability check was conducted. The results of the reliability test showed an 80 percent level of agreement between the two coders. These tests of the coders performance demonstrated that they were applying the methodology accurately and that they were highly consistent in their codings. Following the training period, inter-coders agreement studies were conducted during the coding of the video tapes. There was an 89 percent level of agreement between the two coders in identifying which of the four phases of social grieving was present within the 21 coded segments of 50 minute duration. The paired agreement was at the 69 percent level on the codings which identified the most prominent phase of social grieving. These results gave us a sufficient level of confidence

in the coding data to move forward with the interpretation of the findings. This discussion rested not only upon the acceptable level of inter-coder agreement but also on the many steps that the coders were required to take in coding in order to determine the most prominent phase in a particular segment of time. In addition, the sheer volume of data they had to deal with must be taken into account in considering the level of inter-coder agreements.

Specific steps were taken in the coding of the group sessions and it is necessary to have an understanding of these procedures in order to follow the discussion of the findings presented in the next section. Each session of two and one half hours was divided into three coding periods of 50 minutes each. The coders' task was first to identify the type or types of social grieving in evidence, that is being expressed in the group, during a given period. The coders then employed a set of criteria to determine which of those expressed types of social grieving, if there were more than one present in the period, was the most prominent: that is to say, the phase of social grieving that the group was observed to be primarily focused upon and working through. Thus one or two designations was given to each coding, either the phase was most prominent or it was less prominent. Therefore in any one coding period a coder may observe and record: (1) no evidence of social grieving, (2) one type of social grieving as most prominent, (3) more than one type present and with one being more prominent than the others, (4) types of social grieving present but none observed to be prominent.

An analysis and discussion of the findings

The findings from phase development analysis told the story of a group striving to mature; it also provided the evidence by which to demarcate the beginning (sessions two, three, and four), the middle (sessions five through eight), and end (session nine) of a significant experience of change within the group. With this evidence in place, the coding and then the analyzing of the group's transitional, or in-between, state could begin in order to determine evidence of social grieving.

As discussed earlier, the presence of social grieving during a group's transitional period was tested by a coding procedure which resulted in judgements concerning the presence of grieving within the group's developmental periods. The findings demonstrate that grief work was present when the group was in a transitional period moving from one phase of group development to another phase of group development. This evidence is based upon the extensive observational notes of the coders and their recorded judgements but in the discussion which follows these observations will be presented in a case study narrative form to help the reader better gain a sense of the transitional dynamics within

the group's experience. The four phases of social grieving will be identified in the narrative by a Roman numeral(s) in parentheses.

Since the group's first meeting was an orientation session, our case study begins with the group's second meeting. The group appeared disoriented and drifting while trying to establish a purpose or reason for being together. The group's apparent uncertainty as to direction was accompanied by anger expressed indirectly through humor and sarcasm (III). Early on in the meeting, Brian, a group member, spoke of the group's style of communication as 'disjointed ramblings'. When group members ignored Brian's criticism, he called for 'more risk taking and trust' within the group. Members continued to resist Brian's remarks by offering testimonials to the value and importance of their own disorganization as well as blaming Brian, himself (II). Rather than explore the issue of risk-taking and trust, the group continued to search its past, talk was about what had been in the group's life (II) as if by this way it hoped to find answers which would relieve the growing pressure to get on track. This led to further frustration, irritability, and disorientation (II & III). Eventually, a recovery period began to surface during the second 50 minute period of the meeting. The group slowly began to reassess its situation which, during the final period, led to a new sense of purpose and a deepened investment in the group's life. Group members began responding directly and openly to Brian's challenge. The conversation focused on trust not in the abstract but in the concrete communication and conduct of the group. By the close of meeting three, the group had moved to an increased cohesiveness and a renewed sense of meaning (IV). In addition, the group, as seen through the lens of phase development, was favorably resolving its developmental crisis of Trust vs. Mistrust. Therefore, according to two teams of coders operating independently, phase four of grieving, Recovery and Reorganization, coincided with the group's phase development resolution. The climate within the group had changed dramatically. The earlier back and forth arguments in which Brian had served as a focal person for the group had been resolved and in the process a growth in trust had been achieved. Meeting four found the group once again in transition, this time working to resolve the question of power and authority. Brian challenged the group to risk more, but this time 'to stand on its own', to 'quit waiting around to be led'. As in the group's earlier transition, social grieving once again was evident. Characterized by a preoccupation with the past meeting (II), the group was primarily trying to make sense of its life by returning to an earlier time when its experience as a group was more certain and less precarious. Members reviewed their progress to such an extent as to memorialize the past (II). This constant searching into what had been only escalated their uncertainty as to what was. Brian continued to press his opinion. Several group members appeared angry.