

Working 'into' organisations

A reflective practice group in London for the continuing professional development of experienced consultants and coaches

Monthly, Tuesdays, 1.15pm to 3.45pm

Minimum commitment 10 sessions

A rare opportunity to join a reflective practice group for continuing professional development, suitable for experienced consultants, coaches, and others who work with or 'into' organisations. The group was founded in 2007 and consists of five to eight members who have joined at various times. We meet in our London base at 1 Daleham Gardens, NW3, near Swiss Cottage, Finchley Rd and Belsize Park tubes. Together we

- support each other, digest and learn together from experience
- explore the dilemmas and paradoxes we encounter in our work 'into' organisations
- learn about group dynamics by being in a group
- wrestle with ethical issues
- understand better the contexts of our work.

What members say about the group:

'I tremendously enjoyed yesterday, and in fact, I seem to get a lot of value out of our sessions every single time'

It was following through on the idea of making better use of my personal skill set and my potential associate network to go for bigger projects - which came out of the group - which has landed me with the current workload. . . I doubt very much that I would have even put in the tenders without having benefited from the discipline of the group . . . the context in which to voice the thought, and to have it reflected back and commented on . . . pushed it into the conscious /active category.'

How would a reflective practice group contribute to my professional development?

Experienced practitioners can find it hard to unearth the right professional stimulation and support. This is a rare opportunity to meet together with similarly experienced peers to support each other, digest and learn together from experience, understand better the contexts of our work, and wrestle together with the impact and the issues in the work. A group-analytic group enables a rich encounter with others, so that we can regenerate and

reconnect with our own deepest purposes. In order to achieve this fruitful culture of enquiry, it is important to keep membership as stable as possible, and so we ask members to commit themselves for a minimum of 10 sessions, with the intention of attending all sessions. The group is 'slow-open', which means that members join from time to time and leave when individually appropriate.

Those who work with teams and groups in organisations will find the sustained experience of working together in a group particularly valuable in gaining a deeper understanding of group dynamics.

The group provides a safe and stimulating environment to explore the dilemmas and paradoxes we encounter in our work 'into' organisations. We think together about our work in depth, struggle for broad understanding, wrestle with ethical issues, reflect on tensions. As well as reflecting on organisational dynamics, we consider the individual meanings of the work, or share new intervention techniques and styles. We benefit from the different perspectives and contributions of members from different disciplines, but ask that all members bring a minimum of five years' experience.

Consultants and coaches can experience isolation, and the group may be particularly valuable to sole practitioners, as support and challenge develop over time. It will also be attractive to those who wish to extend their understanding of the unconscious dynamics of organisational life.

The group offers an experience akin to, but broader than, a supervision group, through its focus on the consultant/ coach role. If you are mainly interested in supervision, contact us for details of other opportunities.

Who leads the group?

Christine Thornton is a group analyst [Member of the Institute of Group Analysis -- M.Inst.G.A.] with many years' experience of conducting professional development groups. She established her consulting and coaching practice, Thornton Consulting, in 1990 and is a Member of the Association for Coaching [MAC] and of the British Association for Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic Supervision [BAPPS]. For more information about Christine's approach, visit www.thorntonconsulting.org

How does the group work?

The group is run on group analytic principles, and draws on action learning methodology as well as a systemic and dynamic understanding of organisations. In practical terms the group has two parts. During the first part one group member [in turns] presents a current aspect of their work, and the group uses action learning methodology to assist in understanding it in depth. The second part of the session is an open space in which to explore the learning stimulated for all members by the presentation, their current work,

and/ or the ongoing experience of being together. Any member of the group can bring any aspect of their professional life to this discussion.

The group is 'slow-open', which means that new members will join from time to time, and each individual leaves at the time of their choosing, giving notice to allow the ending to be processed. There are 5-8 members at any time.

What is distinctive about group analysis?

Group analysis developed first as a psychotherapy of individuals via group interaction, and now has many applications in training, professional development and organisational consultation. It focuses on the relationship between the individual and the group, and so is particularly helpful in understanding the individual's experiences in an organisational context. It emphasises the essentially social nature of human experience, and aims at a healthier integration of the individual in her/ his network of professional relationships. It is a democratic and interactive discipline underpinned by systemic, psychoanalytic and social scientific perspectives.

What is the process for joining the group?

The first step is to fill in and return the application form which you can download from our home page. The second step is a free individual consultation for you to explore whether this is the right CPD opportunity for you.

What are the practical arrangements?

The group meets on Tuesday afternoons, to share lunch from 1.15pm and working from 1.45pm to 3.45pm.

What are the dates for the next year?

Tuesday 14 September 2010
Tuesday 12 October 2010
Tuesday 9 November 2010
Tuesday 7 December 2010
Tuesday 11 January 2011
Tuesday 8 February 2011



Tuesday 8 March 2011
Tuesday 12 April 2011
Tuesday 10 May 2011
Tuesday 7 June 2011
Tuesday 5 July 2011

CPD Certification

Continuing professional development certificates are provided.

Fees

The full cost of the group is £73.00 per session if paid monthly, with a 5% reduction if paid five sessions in advance, and a 10% reduction if paid ten sessions in advance.

There is a further 10% fee reduction for members of the Institute of Group Analysis, the Association for Coaching and the Management Development Network.

The fee scale is valid from 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011, and is updated annually by a percentage in line with average prices/ average earnings.

Finally

If you would like to discuss anything before applying, telephone 01962 620572.

For an application form, return to our homepage and download the application form [Word format]. Email the completed form to hello@thorntonconsulting.org

We will then contact you to arrange your free individual consultation.