

The Merrill Counseling Series

12TH EDITION

JOINING TOGETHER
Group Theory and Group Skills

DAVID W. JOHNSON FRANK P. JOHNSON



JOINING TOGETHER

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Twelfth Edition

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Group Theory and Group Skills

DAVID W. JOHNSON

FRANK P. JOHNSON



330 Hudson Street, NY NY 10013

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This book is dedicated to our parents,
Roger W. Johnson and Frances E. Johnson,
who created the basic group to
which we first belonged.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

David W. Johnson is a Professor Emeritus of Educational Psychology. David received his doctoral degree from Columbia University. He has authored over 500 research articles and book chapters and is the author of over 50 books. David is a past-editor of the *American Educational Research Journal*. He held the *Emma M. Birkmaier Professorship in Educational Leadership* at the University of Minnesota from 1994 to 1997 and the *Libra Endowed Chair* for Visiting Professor at the University of Maine in 1996–1997. He received the American Psychological Association’s 2003 Award for Distinguished Contributions of Applications of Psychology to Education and Practice. In 2007 David received (with his brother Roger) *Brock International Prize in Education* administered by the College of Liberal Studies at the University of Oklahoma. In 2008 David received the *Distinguished Contributions to Research in Education Award* from the American Education Research Association. In 2010 he received the *Jeffrey Rubin Theory to Practice Award*, awarded by the International Association for Conflict Management and the Program on Negotiation at the Harvard Law School. In 2011 David received the A. M. Wellner Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology. In 2015 he received the distinguished Alumni Award, Teachers College, Columbia University, and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education. In 2016 he received the Gold Medal for Life Achievement in the Application of Psychology from the American Psychological Foundation. For the past 50 years, David has served as an organizational consultant to schools and businesses throughout the world. He is a practicing psychotherapist.

Frank P. Johnson graduated from Ball State University with a Bachelor of Science in Education and received a Master’s of Divinity from Andover Newton Theological School in Boston and his Doctor in Ministry degree from Louisville Presbyterian Theological School. He has 35 years’ experience in the field of Applied Behavioral Science, with professional recognition from National Training Laboratories Institute (NTL), Institute of Applied Behavioral Science, Association for Creative Change, Consultant/Trainers Southwest, and the Mid-Atlantic Association for Training and Consulting. Frank was employed for 13 years at the University of Maryland Counseling Center, teaching group counseling, and during that time was a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Maryland School of Psychiatry and Human Behavior. He has written many journal articles, contributed chapters to books, and is the coauthor of *Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills*. Frank also has been a consultant with a variety of organizations, including educational, governmental, religious, and industrial. From 1984–1996 he was employed at Ethyl Corporation as a Human Resources Development Associate. Since his retirement from Ethyl, Frank has served as an Interim Minister in several churches and is now employed as a Chaplain for Canon Hospice in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

PREFACE

We, the authors, know a great deal about groups. We grew up in one. There are seven children in our family. Frank is the oldest. David is in the middle. We are five years apart in age. Although Frank was very bossy as a child and refused to ever believe that David was really not supposed to clean up his room, our relationship survived. As part of a group of seven children, we raised each other and learned about group dynamics in the trenches of trying to decide as a group who gets the extra piece of pie, who sits by the windows in the car, who decides which game we are going to play, who sweeps and who mops, and whether we go to sleep with the light on or off.

Families are not the only group setting. Within all organizations and social systems, and throughout all walks of life, groups are the key setting in which things get done. The need for knowledge of group dynamics and skills in being part of small groups is more important than ever. Our original reasons for writing *Joining Together* included introducing readers to both the (a) theory and research findings needed to understand how to make groups effective and (b) skills required to apply that knowledge in practical situations. Expertise in working in groups is based on an integration of such knowledge and skills. *Joining Together* is more than a book reviewing current knowledge in the area of small groups, and it is more than a book of skill-building exercises. The theory and exercises are integrated into an inquiry or experiential approach to learning about the dynamics of small groups. Just as “the truth will make you free,” throughout one’s life, choices, opportunities, and successes are created by (a) knowledge of group dynamics and (b) mastery of the skills required to apply that knowledge in practical situations.

What we know about group functioning is dynamic, not static. It is constantly being revised and updated as new insights are translated into revised theoretical explanations for group behavior and new lines of research. Significant advances in the field continue to be achieved. Much has changed since we published the first edition of this book in 1975. Some theories have been disconfirmed in the intervening years. Other theories have been refined or subsumed into new conceptual systems. This book reflects the new developments in theory and research by taking an updated look at what we know about group dynamics. Although the readers of this book are diverse, *Joining Together* remains focused on the characteristic dynamics found in virtually all groups. Examples are used from all walks of life. Because this book is intended to serve as an introduction to the dynamics of groups, we have maintained a balanced, integrative stance when presenting theories and research findings.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

This new edition includes many significant updates and additions:

- Update of social interdependence theory and research in the group goals chapter.
- Added material on group decision making.

- A thorough coverage of positive power.
- Update of constructive controversy theory and research.
- A new diagnostic questionnaire on constructive controversy in decision-making situations.
- A new chapter on Group Dynamics, Democracy, and Peace
- Added material on diversity among members and its positive effects.

THE FIELD OF GROUP DYNAMICS

The field of group dynamics is in a constant state of change. New theories are being proposed, and old theories are being expanded and refined. The amount of quality of research is steadily increasing. New topics and new methods are being introduced. The need for small-group skills becomes more important each year. The nature and amount of these changes have to be understood in the context of the history of the field. There are three main emphases of the field.

First, as is discussed in Chapter 1, the field of group dynamics primarily originated during and after World War II from concerns about democracy, social problems, and world peace. Although there was some theorizing about and research on group dynamics prior to the 1940s and some research goes back to the 1800s, it was concerns about the Great Depression, the rise of dictatorships in countries such as Germany and Italy, the holocaust in Germany and racism in general, and World War II that resulted in group dynamics becoming a major focus for social scientists. Because science was a factor in winning World War II, science was viewed as a key for improving democracy, solving social problems such as racism, and establishing a lasting world peace. Lewin and others saw group dynamics theory as one way to bridge the gaps among science, public policies, the solution of social problems, and democratic practices. Scientific methods, therefore, were applied to understanding the dynamics of small groups to improve democracy, protect against the reappearance of Fascism, reduce racism and solve other social problems, and establish world peace. The discussions of the theory and research relevant to these concerns have been expanded in this edition throughout many of the chapters

The second emphasis in the field is the scientific study of group dynamics for its own sake. Thus, there are social scientists who are interested in areas such as leadership and decision making who have little interest in whether their findings have implications for social issues. They have conducted numerous studies and introduced new findings and new methods into the study of groups and individual behavior in groups. Many of the chapters in this book have been revised to include the new knowledge resulting from the efforts of these social scientists. References have been updated to ensure the latest findings are included in this edition. In addition, there have been two scientific approaches to the study of group dynamics: the traditional relationship approach, which focuses on variables that exist among group members (such as cooperation and conflict), and the newer individual approach that focuses on variables existing within individuals (such as cognitive dissonance, attributions, and stereotypes). In this text we have tried to keep a balance between the two approaches.

The third emphasis is applying the results of the theorizing and research on group dynamics to the training of leaders and interested individuals in the group skills they need to function effectively in groups and organizations. Group dynamics, perhaps more than any other area of the social sciences, was developed to train civic leaders, members of organizations and communities, and even students in the practical skills they need to be effective and contributing members of the groups to which they belong. In every chapter there are exercises to help readers become more skillful and to apply directly the material they are learning to their everyday lives. The emphasis on small-group skills illustrates the relevance of the theory and research in each chapter. The exercises are kept in the text to make it easy for instructors and readers to access and use them. In some chapters, such as Chapter 8, new exercises and a diagnostic questionnaire have been added to better prepare readers to apply the theory and research they are learning to the actual groups to which they belong. In addition, Chapter 2 explains the theory and procedures for using experiential learning as readers move through the text. Historically, *Joining Together* has been a pioneer in the use of experiential learning to learn group skills. This edition continues to be so along with an emphasis on action research in Chapters 1 and 14.

Given these three emphases in the study of group dynamics, the field remains dynamic and ever changing. This new edition tries to maintain the balance between the three emphases and give readers an awareness of the current state of the field. We have tried to keep all the good qualities of previous editions (such as periodic comprehension tests and ways to summarize what readers have learned) while adding new material to update the book and keep the coverage of group dynamics current. The core topics are unchanged, but covered in more depth.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors wish to thank many people for their help in writing this book and in preparing the manuscript. We owe much to the social psychologists who have influenced our theorizing and to the colleagues with whom we have conducted various types of laboratory-training experiences. We have tried to acknowledge sources of the exercises included in this book whenever possible. Some of the exercises presented are so commonly used that the originators are not traceable. If we have inadvertently missed giving recognition to anyone, we apologize. We also wish to thank the reviewers of this edition: Mark Cameron, Southern Connecticut State University; Dr. Elizabeth Anne Christo-Baker, Purdue University-North Central; Dorcine Spigner Littles, Ph.D., University of Oklahoma; and Nick S. Yackovich, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Finally, special thanks are extended to our wives, Linda Mulholland Johnson and Jane Miley Johnson, who contributed their support to the development and writing of this book.

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BRIEF CONTENTS

- CHAPTER 1 Group Dynamics 1
- CHAPTER 2 Experiential Learning 46
- CHAPTER 3 Group Goals, Social Interdependence, and Trust 69
- CHAPTER 4 Communication Within Groups 137
- CHAPTER 5 Leadership 171
- CHAPTER 6 Using Power 210
- CHAPTER 7 Decision Making 257
- CHAPTER 8 Controversy and Creativity 315
- CHAPTER 9 Managing Conflicts of Interest 371
- CHAPTER 10 Valuing Diversity 435
- CHAPTER 11 Group Dynamics, Democracy, and Peace 467
- CHAPTER 12 Cooperative Learning in the Classroom 480
- CHAPTER 13 Leading Growth and Counseling Groups 507
- CHAPTER 14 Team Development, Team Training 531
- CHAPTER 15 Epilogue 560

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

Group Dynamics 1

| | |
|--|----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 1 |
| Group Dynamics and Me | 2 |
| What Is a Group? | 5 |
| The Importance of Groups | 11 |
| Group Structure | 14 |
| Creating Productive Groups | 18 |
| How to Create an Effective Group | 24 |
| The Development of Groups Over Time | 27 |
| The Field of Group Dynamics | 34 |
| Online Groups | 40 |
| The Nature of This Text and How to Use It | 42 |
| Summary | 45 |

CHAPTER 2

Experiential Learning 46

| | |
|---|----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 46 |
| Procedural Learning | 47 |
| Action Theories | 48 |
| Gaining Expertise Through Experiential Learning | 50 |
| Experiential Learning and Motivation | 53 |
| Learning Group Skills | 54 |
| Role Playing | 57 |
| Learning How to Be a Participant–Observer | 58 |
| Conducting Skill-Training Exercises | 61 |
| Ethics of Experiential Learning | 65 |
| Summary | 67 |

CHAPTER 3

Group Goals, Social Interdependence, and Trust 69

| | |
|--|-----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 69 |
| Introduction | 70 |
| What Is a Goal? | 73 |
| START Goals | 76 |
| Clarity of Goals | 78 |
| Operational Goals | 78 |
| Performance and Mastery Goals | 79 |
| Group Goals and Level of Aspiration | 80 |
| Dealing with Hidden Agendas | 81 |
| Helping Groups Set Effective Goals | 82 |
| Group Goals and Social Interdependence Among Members | 88 |
| Outcomes of Social Interdependence | 93 |
| Effort to Achieve | 95 |
| Positive Relationships and Social Support | 98 |
| Psychological Health and Self-Esteem | 101 |
| Reciprocal Relationships among the Three Outcomes | 108 |
| Mediating Variables: The Basic Elements of Cooperation | 108 |
| The Stability of Cooperation | 116 |
| Using Technology to Enhance Cooperation | 116 |
| Distributive Justice: The Allocation of Benefits Among Group Members | 120 |
| Conditions for Constructive Individualistic Efforts | 123 |
| Mixed-Motive Situations | 124 |
| Developing and Maintaining Trust | 129 |
| Summary | 135 |

CHAPTER 4
Communication Within
Groups 137

| | |
|---|-----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 137 |
| Introduction and Definitions | 138 |
| Group Communication | 140 |
| Sending and Receiving Messages | 142 |
| Communication in a Problem-Solving Group | 152 |
| Interaction Analysis | 152 |
| Communication Networks | 160 |
| Communication Patterns in an Authority Hierarchy | 161 |
| Influences on Effectiveness of Group Communication | 166 |
| Effects of Cooperation and Competition on Communication | 166 |
| Physical Influences on Communication | 167 |
| Seating Arrangements | 168 |
| Humor | 168 |
| Summary | 169 |

CHAPTER 5
Leadership 171

| | |
|--|-----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 171 |
| What Is Leadership? | 172 |
| Trait Theories of Leadership | 181 |
| Leadership Styles | 186 |
| Influence Theory of Leadership | 189 |
| Role Position/Group Structure Approach to Leadership | 190 |
| Situational Theories of Leadership | 195 |
| Organizational Leadership | 199 |
| What If You Do Not Want to Be a Leader? | 203 |
| Summary | 209 |

CHAPTER 6
Using Power 210

| | |
|--|-----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 210 |
| Introduction | 211 |
| What Is Power? | 214 |
| The Dynamic-Interdependence View of Power | 216 |
| Mobilizing Power to Achieve Goals | 220 |
| The Trait-Factor Approach to Power | 223 |
| The Bases of Power | 226 |
| Conflict Model of Social Influence | 229 |
| Power and Problem Solving | 232 |
| Unequal Power | 235 |
| Group Norms: Indirect Power | 248 |
| The Group Mind | 251 |
| Individual Versus Relationship Perspectives | 254 |
| Summary | 255 |

CHAPTER 7
Decision Making 257

| | |
|--|-----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 257 |
| Making Effective Decisions | 258 |
| Individual Versus Group Decision Making | 261 |
| Methods of Decision Making | 275 |
| Factors Enhancing Group Decision Making | 284 |
| Factors Hindering Group Decision Making | 284 |
| Considered and Thoughtful Decision Making | 298 |
| Potential Problems in Decision Making | 306 |
| Problems with Theorizing on Decision Making | 308 |
| Summary | 314 |

CHAPTER 8**Controversy and Creativity 315**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 315 |
| Controversy and Decision Making | 316 |
| Nature of Controversy | 316 |
| Theory of Constructive Controversy | 333 |
| Process of Controversy | 333 |
| Outcomes of Controversy | 340 |
| Conditions Determining the Constructiveness of Controversy | 347 |
| Inquiry-Based Advocacy | 350 |
| Minority Influence, Controversy, and Decision Making | 350 |
| Structuring Constructive Controversies | 352 |
| Being a Citizen in a Democracy | 352 |
| In Conclusion | 353 |
| Creativity | 356 |
| Developing and Fostering Creativity | 359 |
| Open Versus Closed Belief Systems | 362 |
| Brainstorming | 364 |
| Summary | 369 |

CHAPTER 9**Managing Conflicts of Interest 371**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 371 |
| Conflict-Positive Group | 372 |
| Nature of Conflicts of Interest | 372 |
| Conflicts Can Be Destructive or Constructive | 373 |
| Conflict and Aggression | 375 |
| Conflict Management Strategies: What Are You Like? | 378 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Controlling the Occurrence of Conflicts | 382 |
| The Nature of Negotiations | 383 |
| Two Types of Negotiating | 386 |
| The Integrative Negotiating Procedure | 392 |
| Defining the Conflict as a Mutual Problem | 395 |
| Try, Try Again | 409 |
| Negotiating in Good Faith | 412 |
| Refusal Skills: This Issue Is Nonnegotiable | 412 |
| Intergroup Conflict | 415 |
| Third-Party Mediation | 429 |
| Summary | 434 |

CHAPTER 10**Valuing Diversity 435**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 435 |
| Introduction | 436 |
| Diversity | 440 |
| The Value of Diversity | 441 |
| Barriers to Interacting with Diverse Peers | 444 |
| Attribution Theory | 450 |
| Making Member Diversity a Strength | 453 |
| Summary | 458 |

CHAPTER 11**Group Dynamics, Democracy, and Peace 467**

| | |
|---|-----|
| Introduction | 467 |
| Group Dynamics and Democracy | 468 |
| Nature of Democracy | 470 |
| Group Dynamics and Peace | 475 |
| Ways of Establishing Peace | 477 |
| Role of Group Dynamics in Establishing and Maintaining Consensual Peace | 478 |
| Summary | 479 |

CHAPTER 12

Cooperative Learning in the Classroom 480

| | |
|--|-----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 480 |
| Nature of Cooperative Learning | 481 |
| Formal Cooperative Learning: Being "A Guide on the Side" | 483 |
| Preinstructional Decisions | 486 |
| Explaining the Task and Cooperative Structure | 491 |
| Monitoring and Intervening | 493 |
| Evaluating Learning and Processing Interaction | 496 |
| Informal Cooperative Learning Groups | 497 |
| Using Informal Cooperative Learning | 498 |
| Base Groups | 500 |
| Integrated Use of All Three Goal Structures | 502 |
| The Cooperative School | 504 |
| Summary | 505 |

CHAPTER 13

Leading Growth and Counseling Groups 507

| | |
|--|-----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 507 |
| Introduction | 508 |
| Types of Therapeutic Groups | 508 |
| The Unique Power of Group Experiences | 515 |
| Importance of Disclosing Emotions | 520 |
| Leading a Growth Group | 522 |
| Conceptual Frameworks, Feelings, and Intuition | 527 |
| Growth Groups and Participant Anxiety | 529 |
| Costs of Growth and Therapy Groups | 529 |

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Comparative Effectiveness | 529 |
| Summary | 530 |

CHAPTER 14

Team Development, Team Training 531

| | |
|--|-----|
| Basic Concepts to Be Covered in This Chapter | 531 |
| Introduction | 532 |
| What Is a Team? | 533 |
| Organizational Context | 537 |
| Organizational Development | 538 |
| Building Productive Teams | 542 |
| Assessing Quality of Work | 546 |
| Run Chart | 550 |
| Use of Teams in Training Programs | 553 |
| Total Quality Management | 554 |
| Dealing with Problem Behaviors in Teams | 556 |
| Summary | 558 |

CHAPTER 15

Epilogue 560

| | |
|--|-----|
| Guidelines for Creating Effective Groups | 561 |
| Learning Group Skills | 563 |
| Summary | 564 |

Appendix: Answers 565

Glossary 579

References 593

Name Index 653

Subject Index 661

LIST OF EXERCISES

| | | | | | |
|------|--|-----|------|---|-----|
| 1.1 | Your Solitary Activities | 4 | 6.2 | Group Power Exercises | 213 |
| 1.2 | Who Am I? | 4 | 6.3 | Personal Power and Goal Accomplishment | 222 |
| 1.3 | What Is a Group? | 4 | 6.4 | Unequal Resources | 229 |
| 1.4 | Saving the World from Dracula | 21 | 6.5 | Power Politics | 230 |
| 1.5 | Developing an Effective Group | 23 | 6.6 | Power to the Animals | 232 |
| 1.6 | Are Groups Beneficial or Harmful? | 32 | 6.7 | Power Among Summer Students | 243 |
| 3.1 | Orientations Toward Social Interdependence | 70 | 6.8 | Developing Land Areas | 246 |
| 3.2 | Are Group Goals Necessary? | 71 | 6.9 | Your Power Behavior | 254 |
| 3.3 | Your Goal-Related Behavior | 75 | 7.1 | Individual Versus Group Decision Making | 260 |
| 3.4 | Clear and Unclear Goals | 77 | 7.2 | The Bean Jar (i) | 273 |
| 3.5 | Cooperative, Competitive, and Individualistic Goal Structures | 83 | 7.3 | Winter Survival | 294 |
| 3.6 | Subsistence | 86 | 7.4 | They'll Never Take Us Alive | 298 |
| 3.7 | The Level of Acceptance in Your Group | 124 | 7.5 | A Problem Diagnosis Program | 309 |
| 3.8 | How Trusting and Trustworthy Am I? | 125 | 7.6 | The Bean Jar ii | 311 |
| 3.9 | Practicing Trust-Building Skills | 128 | 7.7 | Your Decision-Making Behavior | 312 |
| 3.10 | Definitions | 133 | 8.1 | Controversy: Was Peter Pan Right or Wrong? | 321 |
| 4.1 | Your Communication Behavior (i) | 139 | 8.2 | How I Behave in Controversies | 322 |
| 4.2 | Who Will Be President of Bewise College? | 144 | 8.3 | Stranded in the Desert | 325 |
| 4.3 | Solstice Shenanigans Mystery | 150 | 8.4 | Who Should Get the Penicillin? | 329 |
| 4.4 | Transmission of Information | 153 | 8.5 | Fallout Shelter | 332 |
| 4.5 | One- and Two-Way Communication | 158 | 8.6 | The Johnson School | 354 |
| 4.6 | Communication Networks | 165 | 8.7 | Avoiding Controversies | 355 |
| 4.7 | Your Communication Behavior (ii) | 169 | 8.8 | Beliefs About Creativity | 356 |
| 5.1 | Who Are Your Heroes? | 174 | 8.9 | Creativity | 361 |
| 5.2 | Controversy: What Is the Nature of Leadership? | 176 | 8.10 | Joe Doodlebug | 361 |
| 5.3 | Understanding Your Leadership Actions: Questionnaire | 191 | 8.11 | Brainstorming | 366 |
| 5.4 | Tower-Building | 204 | 8.12 | Creativity Warm-up | 367 |
| 5.5 | Hollow Square | 204 | 8.13 | Your Behavior in Controversies (ii) | 368 |
| 5.6 | Why I Am a Leader! | 208 | 9.1 | Your Conflict Management Strategies | 376 |
| 6.1 | Is Power a Personal or a Relationship Attribute? | 212 | 9.2 | Making a Profit | 385 |
| | | | 9.3 | Negotiating Resolutions to Conflicts of Interest | 390 |
| | | | 9.4 | Negotiating Within an Organization | 409 |
| | | | 9.5 | Breaking Balloons | 413 |

List of Exercises

| | | | | | |
|------|--|-----|------|-------------------------------|-----|
| 9.6 | Intergroup Conflict | 413 | 10.6 | Cross-Cultural Communication | 462 |
| 9.7 | Your Conflict Management Behavior | 433 | 10.7 | Merging Different Cultures | 464 |
| 10.1 | Diversity: Beneficial or Harmful? | 437 | 14.1 | Team Structure | 539 |
| 10.2 | Stereotyping | 460 | 14.2 | The Cooperative Team Scenario | 540 |
| 10.3 | Interacting on the Basis of Stereotypes | 460 | 14.3 | Degree of Interdependence | 541 |
| 10.4 | Greetings and Goodbyes | 461 | 15.1 | Terminating a Group | 563 |
| 10.5 | Time | 462 | 15.2 | Self-Contract | 564 |

CHAPTER ONE

Group Dynamics

BASIC CONCEPTS TO BE COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER

In this chapter a number of concepts are defined and discussed. The major ones are in the following list. Students should divide into pairs. Each pair is to (a) define each concept, noting the page on which it is defined and discussed, and (b) ensure that both members understand its meaning. Then combine into groups of four. Compare the answers of the two pairs. If there is disagreement, look up the concept in the chapter and clarify it until all members agree on and understand the definition.

CONCEPTS

1. Group
2. Group dynamics
3. Group effectiveness
4. Interdependence
5. Role
6. Norm
7. Status
8. Sequential-stage theory of group development
9. Recurring-phase theory of group development
10. Primary group
11. Reference group
12. Group processing
13. Action research
14. Kurt Lewin





GROUP DYNAMICS AND ME

Although the scientific investigations of group work are but a few years old, I don't hesitate to predict that group work—that is, the handling of human beings not as isolated individuals, but in the social setting of groups—will soon be one of the most important theoretical and practical fields. ... There is no hope for creating a better world without a deeper scientific insight into the ... essentials of group life.

Kurt Lewin (1943)

Membership in groups is inevitable and ubiquitous. All day long we interact first in one group and then in another. Our family life, our leisure time, our friendships, and our careers are all filled with groups. In fact, if a person from outer space conducted a study of the people of Earth, group membership would probably be the dominant characteristic noted. We are born into a group called the family, and we would not survive the first few years of our lives, the first few weeks, or even the first few minutes without membership in this group. Within our family and peer groups, we are socialized into ways of behaving and thinking, educated, and taught to have certain perspectives on ourselves and our world. Our **personal identity** is derived from the way in which we are

| Importance of Groups | Nature of Groups | Types of Groups |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are small-group beings • We live in groups • Groups and quality of life | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group orientation • Individual orientation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pseudo • Traditional • Effective • High performance |
| Group Structure | Stages of Group Development | Basic Elements of Effectiveness |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles • Norms | <p><i>Sequential Stages</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forming • Norming • Storming • Performing • Adjourning <p><i>Recurring Stages</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task and emotional expressions • Depend, pair, fight or flight • Affection, inclusion, control | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive interdependence • Individual accountability • Promotive interaction • Social skills • Group processing <p>Field of Group Dynamics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of group dynamics • History of group dynamics • Kurt Lewin • Nature of book |
| <p>Dynamics of Promotive Interaction</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating clear, operational, mutual goals members are committed to • Communicating ideas and feelings accurately and clearly • Distributed participation and leadership • Equal access to power based on expertise, access to information • Decision procedures flexibly matched with situational needs • Controversy used to promote creative problem solving, critical thinking • Conflicts are faced, encouraged, and resolved constructively | | |

Figure 1.1 Nature of group dynamics.

perceived and treated by other members of our groups. We learn, work, worship, and play in groups. As humans we have an inherent social nature: Our lives are filled with groups from the moment of our births to the moment of our deaths.

Group dynamics is the area of social science that focuses on advancing knowledge about the nature of group life. It is the scientific study of the nature of groups, behavior in groups, group development, and the interrelations between groups and individuals, other groups, and larger entities. Knowledge of group dynamics has the potential to change the way we think about groups and, consequentially, the way we function in groups. The purposes of this text, therefore, are to help you understand the theory and research on group dynamics and improve your own small-group skills.

As a starting point, Figure 1.1 provides a helpful summary of the nature of group dynamics. The different concepts and terms listed in Figure 1.1 are discussed throughout this chapter and the rest of the text. After reviewing the information provided in

SELF-DIAGNOSIS

Each of the following seven statements describes an action related to group effectiveness. For each statement mark:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 5 if you always behave that way | 2 if you seldom behave that way |
| 4 if you frequently behave that way | 1 if you never behave that way |
| 3 if you occasionally behave that way | |

WHEN I AM A MEMBER OF A GROUP

- ___ **1.** I clarify the group's goals and ensure that the goals are formulated so members "sink or swim" together and are committed to achieving them.
- ___ **2.** I facilitate communication by modeling good sending and receiving skills and ensuring communication among all group members is distributed and two-way.
- ___ **3.** I provide leadership by taking whatever action is needed to help the group achieve its goals and maintain good working relationships among members, and I encourage all other members to do the same.
- ___ **4.** I use my expertise and knowledge to influence the other group members to increase their efforts to achieve our mutual goals, and I let myself be influenced by other members who are knowledgeable and have relevant expertise.
- ___ **5.** I suggest different ways of making decisions (such as majority vote or consensus) depending on the (a) availability of time and resources, (b) size and seriousness of the decision, and (c) amount of member commitment needed to implement the decision.
- ___ **6.** I advocate my views and challenge the views of others to create high-quality and creative decisions.
- ___ **7.** I face my conflicts with other group members and present the conflicts as problems to be jointly solved. If we are unable to do so, I request the help of other group members to help us resolve the conflicts constructively.

___ **Total Score**

Figure 1.1, think carefully about each of the statements listed in the Self-Diagnosis on page 3. These statements are designed to make you think concretely about your current understanding of groups and how you participate in them.

EXERCISE 1.1

YOUR SOLITARY ACTIVITIES

1. List everything you do in a typical day from the moment you wake up to the moment you fall asleep.
2. Delete from your list all the activities you perform with groups of people and see what is left.
3. Form a group of three, and discuss the results.

EXERCISE 1.2

WHO AM I?

We are all members of groups. If we are asked to describe who we are, most of us include information about the groups to which we belong. "I'm a student at the University of Minnesota," "I'm a member of the hockey team," "I'm a Johnson," "I'm a male," "I'm an American," and so forth. Membership in groups may be formal ("I'm an employee of IBM"), aspiring ("I want to be rich"), marginal ("Sometimes I'm invited to Ralph's parties, sometimes I'm not"), voluntary ("I'm a Baptist"), and nonvoluntary ("I'm a female"). To a large extent, our memberships define who we are as individuals.

1. We can all describe ourselves in many ways. Write ten different answers to the question "Who am I?" on a sheet of paper. Answer in terms of groups you belong to, beliefs you hold, and your roles and responsibilities.
2. Rank your answers from most important to your sense of self to least important to your sense of self.
3. Form a group of three, and share your self-descriptions. Count how many memberships are represented in the triad. Discuss the role of groups in your view of who you are as a person.
4. Count how many group memberships are represented in the class.

EXERCISE 1.3

WHAT IS A GROUP?

The definition of a group is controversial. The purpose of this exercise is to structure a critical examination of the different definitions. The procedure is as follows:

1. The class forms groups of seven members.
2. Each member receives a sheet containing one of the seven definitions that appear on the following pages. Without interacting with the other group members, each member is to:
 - a. Study his or her definition until it is thoroughly understood.
 - b. Plan how to teach the definition to the other members of the group.
 - c. Give three examples of groups that meet the criterion contained in the definition.
 - d. Give three examples of two or more people in close proximity who do not meet the criterion contained in the definition.
 - e. Explain in what way(s) his or her group (doing this exercise) meets the criterion contained in the definition.

Allow ten minutes for this phase of the exercise.

3. Each group meets to derive a single definition of the concept *group*. Up to twenty minutes are allowed for this phase.
4. Each group reads its definition to the entire class.
5. If there is substantial disagreement, the class forms new groups (composed of one member from each of the previous groups). The task of the new group is to arrive at one definition of the concept *group*, each member representing the definition of his or her former group.
6. Each group reads its definition to the entire class.



WHAT IS A GROUP?

It takes two flints to make a fire.

Louisa May Alcott

In a bus trapped in a traffic jam, six passengers begin to talk to each other, comparing reactions and sharing previous similar experiences. They start to develop a plan of action to get the bus out of the heavy traffic. Is this a group? In Yellowstone National Park it is deep winter. Several cross-country skiers glide through an isolated, snow-covered valley. They are studying winter ecology and photography. Periodically they cluster around a professional photographer as he explains the ways the winter scenes may be photographed. The vacationers admire and discuss the beautiful winter scenery as they photograph it. Is this a group? Do groups exist at all? How do you tell when you are a member of a group?

If reading a book on group dynamics, you first need to understand what a group is. We all know that groups exist, but confusion and disagreements abound when we try to define the word *group*. Many social scientists think they know exactly what a group is. The trouble is, they do not agree with one another. The reasoning behind seven of the most common definitions of the word *group* is discussed in the following sections. Notice where and how the definitions are the same and where and how they are different.

Goals

A **group** may be defined as a number of individuals who join together to achieve a goal. Groups exist for a reason. People join groups to achieve goals they are unable to achieve by themselves. It is questionable whether a group could exist unless there was a mutual goal that its members were trying to achieve. Freeman, as early as 1936, pointed out

that people join groups to achieve common goals. Other social scientists who have defined *group* this way are Mills and Deutsch:

To put it simply, they [small groups] are units composed of two or more persons who come into contact for a purpose and who consider the contact meaningful. (Mills, 1967, p. 2)

A psychological group exists (has unity) to the extent that the individuals composing it perceive themselves as pursuing promotively interdependent goals. (Deutsch, 1949a, p. 136)

Interdependence

A **group** may be defined as a collection of individuals who are interdependent in some way. According to this definition, the individuals are not a group unless an event that affects one of them affects them all. Social scientists who have defined group in this way believe:

A group is a collection of individuals who have relations to one another that make them interdependent to some significant degree. As so defined, the term group refers to a class of social entities having in common the property of interdependence among their constituent members. (Cartwright & Zander, 1968, p. 46)

By this term [group] we generally mean a set of individuals who share a common fate, that is, who are **interdependent** in the sense that an event which affects one member is likely to affect all. (Fiedler, 1967, p. 6)

Conceiving of a group as a dynamic whole should include a definition of group which is based on interdependence of the members (or better, the subparts of the group). (Lewin, 1951, p. 146)

Interpersonal Interaction

A **group** may be defined as a number of individuals who are interacting with one another. According to this definition, a group does not exist unless interaction occurs. Social scientists who have defined group in this way state:

For a collection of individuals to be considered a group there must be some interaction. (Hare, 1976, p. 4)

A group is a number of people in interaction with one another, and it is this interaction process that distinguishes the group from an aggregate. (Bonner, 1959, p. 4)

A group may be regarded as an open interaction system in which actions determine the structure of the system and successive interactions exert coequal effects upon the identity of the system. (Stodgill, 1959, p. 18)

We mean by a group a number of persons who communicate with one another often over a span of time, and who are few enough so that each person is able to communicate with all the others, not at secondhand, through other people, but face-to-face. (Homans, 1950, p. 1)

Perceptions of Membership

A **group** may be defined as a social unit consisting of two or more persons who perceive themselves as belonging to a group. According to this definition, the persons are not a group unless they perceive themselves to be part of a group. Social scientists who have defined group in this way posit:

A small group is defined as any number of persons engaged in interaction with one another in a single face-to-face meeting or series of such meetings, in which each member receives some impression or perception of each other member distinct enough so that he can, either at the time or in later questioning, give some reaction to each of the others as an individual person, even though it be only to recall that the other was present. (Bales, 1950, p. 33)

We may define a social group as a unit consisting of a plural number of separate organisms (agents) who have a collective perception of their unity and who have the ability to act and/or are acting in a unitary manner toward their environment. (Smith, 1945, p. 227)

Structured Relationships

A **group** may be defined as a collection of individuals whose interactions are structured by a set of roles and norms. According to this definition, the individuals are not a group unless role definitions and norms structure their interactions. Social scientists who have defined group in this way are McDavid and Harari (1968) and Sherif and Sherif (1956):

A social-psychological group is an organized system of two or more individuals who are interrelated so that the system performs some function, has a standard set of role relationships among its members, and has a set of norms that regulate the function of the group and each of its members. (McDavid & Harari, p. 237)

A group is a social unit which consists of a number of individuals who stand in (more or less) definite status and role relationships to one another and which possesses a set of values or norms of its own regulating the behavior of individual members, at least in matters of consequence to the group. (Sherif & Sherif, p. 144)

Mutual Influence

A **group** may be defined as a collection of individuals who influence each other. Individuals are not a group unless they are affecting and being affected by each other, and therefore, the primary defining characteristic of a group is interpersonal influence. Shaw (1976, p. 11) stated, "A group is two or more persons who are interacting with one another in such a manner that each person influences and is influenced by each other person."

Motivation

A **group** may be defined as a collection of individuals who are trying to satisfy some personal need through their joint association. According to this definition, the individuals are not a group unless they are motivated by some personal reason to be part of a group. Individuals belong to the group to obtain rewards or to satisfy personal needs. It is questionable that a group could exist unless its members' needs are satisfied by their membership. Social scientists who have defined group in this way write:

We define "group" as a collection of individuals whose existence as a collection is rewarding to the individuals. (Bass, 1960, p. 39)

The definition which seems most essential is that a group is a collection of organisms in which the existence of all (in their given relationships) is necessary to the satisfaction of certain individual needs in each. (Cattell, 1951, p. 167)

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO DEFINE A GROUP?

Following are several definitions of the concept *group*. Rank them from most accurate (1) to least accurate (7). Write down your rationale for your ranking. Find a partner, and share your ranking and rationale, listen to his or her ranking and rationale, and cooperatively create a new, improved ranking and rationale. Then find another pair and repeat the procedure in a group of four.

| Rank | Definition |
|-------|---|
| _____ | A group is a number of individuals who join together to achieve a goal. |
| _____ | A group is several individuals who are interdependent in some way. |
| _____ | A group is a number of individuals who are interacting with one another. |
| _____ | A group is a social unit consisting of two or more persons who perceive themselves as belonging to a group. |
| _____ | A group is a collection of individuals whose interactions are structured by a set of roles and norms. |
| _____ | A group is a collection of individuals who influence each other. |
| _____ | A group is a collection of individuals who are trying to satisfy some personal need through their joint association. |

Some of these definitions may be overly specific. Some of the definitions may overlap in some ways. What each implies, however, is that not every collection of people is a group. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) defines a *group* as a number of persons or things regarded as forming a unit on account of any kind of mutual or common relation or classified together on account of a common degree of similarity. On the basis of the preceding definitions, a **small group** may be defined as two or more individuals in face-to-face interaction, each aware of their positive interdependence as they strive to achieve mutual goals, each aware of his or her membership in the group, and each aware of the others who belong to the group. Though there may be some groups that do not fully fit this definition, the most commonly recognized examples of groups do.

Groups may be contrasted with aggregates. An **aggregate** is a collection of individuals who are present at the same time and place but who do *not* form a unit or have a common degree of similarity. Individuals standing on a street corner, the members of an audience at a play, and students listening to a lecture are aggregates, not groups.

A distinction may be made between small and large groups. Whereas the definition of small groups usually includes member interaction, a group may also involve large numbers of members who have some common characteristic without actually meeting one other (such as a reference group, discussed later in this chapter). A community can be a large group, as can individuals with the same ethnic heritage.

Do Groups Even Exist?

Not everyone believes that groups exist. One of the more interesting social science debates centers on the nature of groups. There are two contrasting positions: the

group orientation and the individual orientation. Those that support group orientation focus on the group as a whole, as something separate from the individual group members. In explaining the actions of group members, social scientists focus on the influences of the group and the larger social system of which it is a part. They believe that when people come together as a group, they form a new social entity with its own rules, attitudes, beliefs, and practices.

Supporters of the individualist orientation, however, focus on the individual in the group; without individuals, groups do not exist. To explain the functioning of the group, social scientists study the attributes, cognitions, and personalities of the group members. One of the first supporters of an individualist orientation, Floyd Allport (1924), argued that groups do not think, feel, or act—only people do; therefore, groups are not real entities and are not deserving of study. See the Group Orientation vs. Individualistic Orientation sidebar for more information about these two positions.

Group Orientation

The *group orientation* focuses on the group as a whole. In explaining the actions of group members, social scientists focus on the influences of the group and the larger social systems of which it is part. Emile Durkheim (1898, p. 104), arguing that groups were entities different from individuals, stated, “If, then, we begin with the individual, we shall be able to understand nothing of what takes place in the group.” He posited that small *primary groups* (small groups characterized by face-to-face interaction, interdependence, and strong group identification such as families and very close friends) are the building blocks of society, and he worked upward from this level to an analysis of social systems in general. He was convinced that a group mind or collective consciousness dominated an individual’s will in many situations. Le Bon (1895) believed that a group mind exists separate from the minds of individual members. Cartwright and Zander (1968) maintained that a group can be emotionally healthy or pathological. Cattell (1951) described groups as possessing different personalities. Lewin (1935), as a Gestalt psychologist, noted that a group cannot be understood by considering only the qualities and characteristics of each member. When individuals merge into a group, something new is created that must be seen as an entity in itself. Changes in one aspect of a group will necessarily lead to changes in the other group features.

Individualistic Orientation

The *individualistic orientation* focuses on the individual in the group. In order to explain the functioning of the group, psychologists focus on the attitudes, cognitions, and personalities of the members. Floyd Allport (1924) argued that groups do not think, feel, or act (only people do), and therefore, groups are not real and are not deserving of study. He said, “Groups have no nervous systems, only individuals have nervous systems.” To Allport, groups are no more than (a) shared sets of values, ideas, thoughts, and habits that exist simultaneously in the minds of several persons or (b) the sum of the actions of each member taken separately. His *coup de grâce* was his observation, “You can’t stumble over a group.” Many social scientists have agreed with Allport and have taken a rather cavalier approach to the attributes that determine whether a collection of people is a group. Groups have also been defined on the basis of individual perceptions of other members (Bales, 1950), individual reward (Bass, 1960), and individual purpose and meaning (Mills, 1967). Much of the research on groups, furthermore, has used individual members as the unit of analysis.

Solomon Asch (1952) adopted a middle ground by comparing groups to water. He argued that to understand the properties of water, it is important to know the characteristics of its elements, hydrogen and oxygen. This knowledge alone, however, is not sufficient to understand water—the combination of hydrogen and oxygen must be