

It can be understood that Homoeopathy stimulates the body's vital force and so sets in motion the patient's own healing powers.

Strangely enough Homoeopathy and Acupuncture are sometimes practised together. Although dissimilar on the surface, they are in fact basically the same in concept and teaching. The Chinese accurately traced this flow of energy throughout the body. They taught that this Life-force or energy, flows in certain directions along specific courses. These courses are known as meridians or Bonghan ducts. Each is controlling a different body function or organ. The state of these meridians can be assessed at the radial pulse and then the pattern of energy regulated according to the

acupuncture law.

The main value of acupuncture lies in its rapid effect compared with homoeopathy. So when the body's life-force is under great pressure from a disease, homoeopathy and acupuncture should be used together. Homoeopathy grew in the West and Acupuncture in the East. They both have the same basic teaching, and the same approach to disease and its eradication. They both recognise that the life-force the same is the only factor that can rid the body of disease, and that any form of medicine can only work by stimulating this force. Homoeopathy and acupuncture are both therefore entirely natural forms of healing.

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Ronald Ullmann

## Some Preliminary Thoughts on T-Groups and Sensitivity Training

In 1947, T-Groups were born by accident at the National Training Laboratories at Bethel in the U.S.A. Since then centres of T-Group training have grown up in the U.S.A. and in England, Denmark, Holland, and elsewhere. Successful T-Group trainers have written papers to explain their understanding of their methods and of the processes that occur within groups.

There has emerged an Orthodoxy of T-Group training. It seems to me that this Orthodoxy is perhaps falling into the same trap that all orthodoxies are prone to. Whether the orthodoxy concerns religious beliefs, or theories in physics or in biology or in psychology, there is a natural tendency to resist the change of accepted principles. In the 'exact' sciences, however, principles governing each of several parameters can be tested by controlled experiments. By 'controlled' it is meant that parameters not under test can be kept constant. In the other sciences such as psychology, controlled experiments are difficult and sometimes impossible, so that progress (notwithstanding the use of statistical techniques) is by the dubious process of general acceptance. Theories which are mutually inconsistent are supported by different schools of thought. The evidence is chosen by each school to support its theories. Sometimes, it seems common sense and much evidence is thrown to the winds rather than modify cherished theories.

The Orthodoxy of T-Group training runs on the following lines: The trainer might begin by advising the group that he will not be its leader. That the group is free to discuss what it wishes to. That the purpose of the group is to examine the processes that occur within the group with the aim of: -

- (a) learning about the dynamics that exist within groups;
- (b) learning about how we behave. In particular how we are seen by others;
- (c) learning about leadership in groups;
- (d) increasing sensitivity to others;
- (e) learning how to tap *every* human resource in a working group.

The trainer may then stop talking.

The group will then turn to the trainer for advice. They may ask what to discuss. If the trainer gives no lead, they might ask what other groups discuss. T-Group Orthodoxy describes this behaviour as 'depending on authority'.

The group having chosen a topic, discusses it for some time. Invariably it is a general subject outside the group. The trainer will wait until he feels it appropriate to bring the discussion back to the 'here and now'. T-Group Orthodoxy states that the only *real* learning is during 'here and now' discussions. It states that 'there and then' discussions (defined as anything not 'here and now' are merely avoidance techniques of the truly real feelings within the here and now.

The group might at first give way to the trainer's wish for a here and now discussion, but depending on the circumstances they may begin to attack the trainer. This the Orthodoxy describes as 'rebellious against authority'. It is also often described as aggression resulting from group frustration, which is healthy and should be 'worked out'.

I should like to examine dependence on authority; avoidance of the 'here and now'; rebellious against authority.

When a group of students sits down in a lecture room they see the lecturer as having some knowledge to impart to them. Otherwise what is he there for?

When the T-Group trainer states that the group will be leaderless - he is not believed. Of course not. What is he there for if not to lead - even if this leadership is subtle? The group begins therefore by feeling confused and doubting the trainer's word.

They turn to the trainer not so much as an authority figure in this instance, but to make some sort of useful suggestion for a topic based on past experience. This is perfectly reasonable behaviour and does not in my view show that the group is unduly dependent on authority.

When the trainer exerts pressure on the group to discuss the 'here and now' (pressure by means of words or behaviour, e.g. boredom) he *is* acting as leader and authority figure. This he may have denied in his opening talk. The group has now further reason to support the mistrust they felt at the outset. He is manipulating after all.

Very often most of the members of the group were genuinely interested in the 'there and then' topic. But no. Orthodoxy states that they are avoiding the 'here and now'. By now the group are beginning to feel understandably hostile to the trainer. They attack him because he is exerting pressure on them to do things they do not wish to do. They attack him because they mistrust him. A group member has described Trainer behaviour as being calculated to dis-orient. Often at **this** stage some members will query the point of it all.

I query the point of this type of trainer behaviour. If the T-Group is successful is it because of this confusing approach or in spite of it?

What does a T-Group achieve? And how?

I believe there is one distinct area of learning - the reality of how we are seen by others.

Evidence that we do not know the reality of how others see us occurs when we 'simply cannot understand' another's behaviour towards oneself. This is not incontrovertible evidence - the behaviour might indeed be incomprehensible to any onlooker - but the more often it happens, the stronger the evidence. A manager bewails the quality of staff. They always leave after a short time. He pays well. He 'cannot understand' their behaviour although he gives reasons to allay a suspicion in himself that he is to blame.

In T-Groups, Orthodoxy states that only when personal feedback is given such as 'you appear to me as a strict unbending father' learning occurs.

This personal feedback is indeed valuable provided it is not perceived as an attack and is acceptable to the receiver. It tells him how others in the group see him. But T-Groups in the first instance are usually composed of strangers. This is necessary to achieve open-ness. Otherwise there is fear of repercussions after the group is over. (A boss will not be able to forget his subordinate's opinion of him as expressed in an open group). It follows that if discussion is restricted to the here and now, the feelings are those experienced after a short time of acquaintance.

A manager who behaves aggressively with staff when under pressure of work may not behave similarly with a group of strangers, so that where he feels frustrated in that group, his coping with frustration may take a different form. There is a likelihood, therefore, that 'how others see him' in the T-Group will not relate closely with his real life 'how others see him'.

However, what happens if 'there and then' discussions are allowed? Although the reality of 'there and then' descriptions can never be checked, the manager may come to express his problem with staff - and his explanations. The trainer - if he says

anything - will merely in 'Rogerian' fashion reflect his feelings in an uncritical and accepting (not agreeing) way. The learning that then might result is that the manager wonders whether his explanations are the *real* ones. He doubts his own explanations. In my view the reason for the success of this Rogerian approach may be that when he hears the trainer repeat his own view of reality, he hears it with different ears. His emotions are perhaps one stage removed from his opinions while those opinions are expressed by another.

I believe that I have experienced this type of learning when 'there and then' discussions are allowed. I believe that groups if allowed to discuss the 'there and then' as well as the 'here and now' do not have to pass through the 'frustration with trainer - rebelling against him' syndrome. This syndrome I believe to be harmful to the group's learning because mistrust is bred. Mistrust prevents open-ness. Frustrations with the trainer if they occur should not be artificial ones involving his confusing behaviour but real ones involving authority in general (for example). I believe trainers should make it clear that they *are* leaders, but not in the expected sense of a directive lecturer or even a chairman. They should explain this to the group so that the mistrust which naturally arises when they claim not to be leaders, yet behave as such, is avoided.

This last paragraph has been a list of beliefs because my experience is short and the evidence accordingly sparse. I should like to test these beliefs. Are T-Groups participants really changing for the better as a result of T-Group training? Who says so, trainers, participants, their friends, or their work colleagues?

If T-Groups succeed - why? If some T-Groups succeed and others fail, what is the difference? What is failure? There is a natural reluctance on the part of any T-Group trainer to consider that there was failure. If a participant leaves the room while emotionally disturbed, is this evidence of failure? If a participant refuses to attend is this evidence of failure? If the group remains hostile to the end, is this evidence of failure? Is some failure the group's or the individual's problem? Is other failure the trainer's problem? These seem to me to be important and urgent questions that demand answers if T-Groups are to develop organically rather than fossilize.

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In primitive conditions, small human groups living by the chase and by simple agriculture encountered circumstances not unlike those which prevail in the life of isolated single cells. Individuals were, indeed, free to move about over wide ranges and to forage for themselves, but they were dependent on what their immediate environment at the moment could furnish. They had little control over that environment. Of necessity they had to submit to the conditions which it determined.

Only when human beings are grouped in large aggregations, much as cells are grouped to form organisms, is there the opportunity of developing an internal organization which can offer mutual aid and the advantage, to many, of special individual ingenuity and skill.

*The Wisdom of the Body* Walter B. Cannon (Norton 1963)