# Group Dynamics: C7P7A7

## © 2018 Julie Hay

*The following appeared as the content of No. 55 of a series of blogs where I am working through ideas I have written about over the years. If you would like to see others, please go to www.juliehay.org*

In Blog 26 I presented C5P5A5 as a handy donkey bridge (Townsend, 1994) for remembering a list of factors to think about when we are analysing group processes. I traced my development of this from 1993 through to 2012 (Gobes, 1993; Hay, 1993, 2009, 2012). However, I overlooked an alternative I had described in a publication I wrote for Fenman (Hay, 2004). Below, therefore, is a new version based on a combination of the two different versions of C5P5A5. This now has 7 factors for each, and has therefore become C7P7A7.

As before, we cannot keep all of these in mind at once so they can be considered roughly chronologically. C7 relates to what is happening as the group starts up. P7 applies once the group has moved into doing its work. A7 is relevant as the group is reaching the end of a task or a meeting.

**Context –** what is the context within which the group is functioning and how might this be influencing the group dynamics?

**Contact** – how well is initial contact being made between the group members; are they taking time to create relationships?

**Contract** – what is the contract, or agreed remit, of the group; are group members clear about this?

**Content** – is the content of the discussion related to the contract; are group members focusing on appropriate content?

**Creativity** – is there evidence of creativity; are new ideas welcomed?

**Commitment** – do all group members seem equally committed to the work of the group; are they all contributing?

**Contrasts** – how are group members using any differences between them (e.g. cultures, styles, etc) rather than these leading to unhelpful conflict?

**Personal** – is the group process respectful; are they listening to each other and communicating effectively?

**Professional** – are the group at the performing stage (Tuckman, 1965); are they working on the issues in line with their professional roles?

**Psychological** – is the process clean, with a lack of hidden messages; are the group avoiding game playing?

**Power** – is there an absence of power plays; are more senior group members encouraging others to play a full part?

**Paradigms** – whose maps of the world are being operated within; are group members being open-minded enough about the perspectives of others?

**Parallel** – is the group functioning in the here-and-now and avoiding any sense of parallel process (Searles, 1955) dynamics outside the group (such as replaying conflicts between their managers)?

**Performing** – has the group reached the performing stage;

**Attachment** – have the group reached the stage where they are close and open with each other?

**Autonomy** – are group members managing to be autonomous and offer their own views rather engaging in groupthink?

**Authenticity** – are group members being genuine about their feelings and opinions rather than holding back?

**Alternatives** – is the group generating alternatives and choosing from a range of options rather than closing down too quickly?

**Actions** – are practical actions being generated or identified, accompanied by enough details about plans for implementation?

**Accountability** – are the group members allocating/accepting responsibilities to specific group members for ensuring actions are implemented?

**Aims** – do the outcomes relate back to the original aims of the group?

## References

Gobes, Landy (1993) C4P4: A Consultation Checklist *Transactional Analysis Journal* 23:1 42-44

Hay, Julie (1993) C4P5A3: A Donkey Bridge for Group Processes *Groupvine* Winter 11-12

Hay, Julie (2004) Analyzing Group Behaviour *Train the Trainer*, Fenman 13

Hay, Julie (2009) *Transactional Analysis for Trainers* 2nd edition Hertford: Sherwood Publishing

Hay, Julie (2012) *Donkey Bridges for Developmental TA* 2nd edit Hertford: Sherwood Publishing

Searles, Harold F. (1955) The Informational Value of the Supervisor's Emotional Experiences *Psychiatry* Vol 18 pp. 135-146 (later reproduced in *Collected Papers on Schizophrenia and Related Subjects*, H. F. Searles, Karnac Books 1965)

Townsend, John (1994) Making Messages Memorable *Training and Development* January

Tuckman, Bruce (1965) Developmental sequence in small groups *Psychological Bulletin* 63 384-399