

TASK AUTHORITY ORGANISATION

Studying stuckness, movement and hope

Sunday 11 August to Saturday 24 August 2024
CIM Moor Hall



THE LEICESTER CONFERENCE 2024



The Primary Task of the Conference is

To study the exercise of authority in the taking up of roles through the interpersonal, inter-group and institutional relations that develop within the conference as an organisation within its wider context.

If we put all our associations together, we can start to understand something that connects us, that's a way of thinking, that everybody can share in.

Susan Long

There's hope yet... because they're so angry; it was that sort of anger in which hope lay, something about identifying the potential of human beings.

Gordon Lawrence

Quotes from *Systems Psychodynamics: Theorist and Practitioner Voices from the Field* (2024) by David Lawlor and Mannie Sher

The 'Leicester Conference' is known as the mothership of Group Relations Conferences. 'Mother', as an archetypal concept, is a safe space; somewhere we can return to when we need to breathe and reflect.

My mother used to tell me to "*always wear the pink glasses*", associating pink with hope and optimism. Arguably, 'rose-tinted glasses' can be seen as overly optimistic, but I internalised her advice as meaning to always look for the good in the bad, or the hope in the despair. She was a great believer in the idea that there is always a silver lining, and so although I lost her before I even turned 20, and it was difficult to imagine a silver lining in that, I have always tried to stay with this idea and wear pink glasses. With each year passing, I have understood better the hardship of her life, but wearing my pink glasses I am able to appreciate the years she was around me, her love that had enriched my core, and which has enabled me to withstand and move through various obstacles in the following years.

The Leicester conference is known as the mothership for similar reasons – it is a type of a sanctuary in the sense of being a space where difference and conflict have a place, a meeting across boundaries is possible. Fighting, learning, working, moving, questioning, getting stuck and unstuck, crying, laughing – the ebbs and flows at the Leicester conference, with the added uniqueness of

encountering people from all corners and aspects of the world, are second to none. Anybody who has been to the conference before would vouch for that and many – indeed – look for opportunities to return, to different sub-conferences and in different roles, also to find and experiment with change and newness.

And so it is with great excitement that I am welcoming you to the Leicester Conference's 78th edition, with myself in the conference director and emerging sub-conference director roles, and Rachel Kelly, who has mothered this conference from the admin role and then as a staff consultant for almost 20 years, in the associate director role, and director of the deepening praxis training group.

These are turbulent times in our human as well as non-human world. Many threats and shadows engulf our attempts to make this world a better place, a place where autonomy and interdependence can co-exist. However, we believe that it is possible to adapt and learn, to coinhabit and open up authentic dialogue, and to cement relationships across boundaries of our various identities.

Rachel and I together with Leah and Marco as the Directorate have gathered the rest of the staff group and we are excited to invite you to join us in the tranquillity of Moor Hall to see what we can do when we simply come together, in hope, and with an intention to find and re-find ourselves and each other, to become unstuck and move.

We come together in between two major sporting events taking place in Europe this summer, and hopefully will be inspired by a similar sporting spirit of both competing, whilst collaborating. Finding our independence through relying on our individual achievements and targets, whilst also working (and competing) together as part of a team. Representing (our countries, our teams) and being represented (through the fans and through our team-mates), whilst being challenged by and challenging our bodies and minds. The Leicester conference can be thought of as a particular sports event in space and time; another kind of an opportunity to embody role, authority, nuance, movement and stuckness, whilst working towards a joint task.

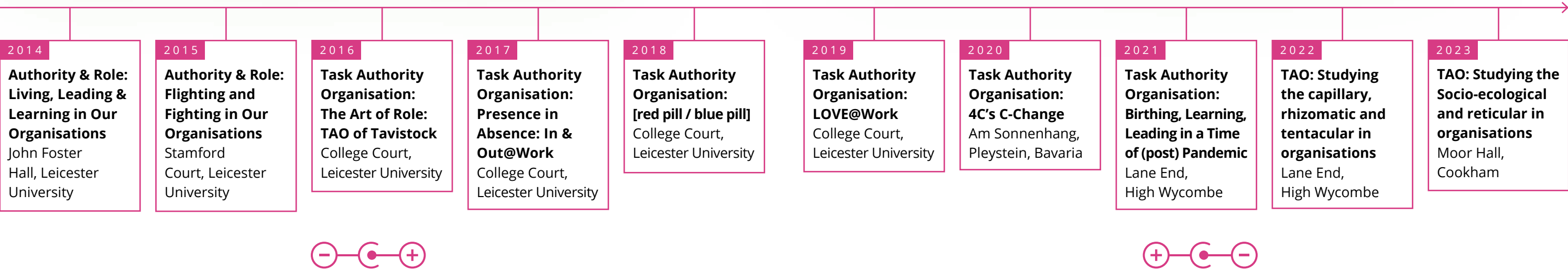
Eliat Aram

Conference Director



Previous Leicester conferences

The Leicester conference has happened every year since 1957



Conference directorate



Eliat Aram, PhD

is the CEO of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations in London, UK. Her Group Relations career spans almost 30 years of conferences in the UK and abroad, across cultural and geographical boundaries. Eliat has shaped, influenced and often directed the Tavistock Institute's flagship Leicester conference since 2007.

She has a keen interest in the practice of human relationships. She is super excited to – yet again – bring together people from all over the world and provide the space and opportunities for working through and learning to enable movement out of the stuckness of conflict into a hopeful integration of self and community in our otherwise polarised world.



Rachel Kelly, BA

Rachel is a principal and trustee of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations and a Group Relations consultant, and Organisational Development & Change consultant. She has extensive experience of Leicester conferences and international Group Relations conferences. She is currently producing online learning courses about Group Relations on FutureLearn. She practices and teaches the Alexander Technique, since 2006, which is all about movement, resistance, letting go and a kind of faith, a stepping into the unknown. So, she is enthusiastically looking forward to studying these with you at the next Leicester conference.



Leah Ashton-Hurst

Leah is the Operations Manager and People Coordinator at the Tavistock Institute. She is joining the Leicester conference staff team for the third time, as Lead Administrator. Leah has hope that this conference will provide a container for productive work and a space to move through the stuckness that comes with difficult conversations, in the wider context of the global situation.



Marco Valerio, PhD

Marco fulfills several roles as a program manager, researcher, meditation teacher, and organizational consultant, residing and working across three continents. His primary focus is on helping individuals and organizations to flourish. His interest in Group Relations Conferences began eight years ago in Leicester. Having participated in multiple conferences as both a participant and staff member, he eagerly anticipates this year's LC2024. Marco is curious about how the themes of the conference, namely stuckness, movement, and hope, will manifest in the collective body and mind of the temporary organization.



Staff



Jean Cooper, PhD

Jean lives and works in South Africa, where he founded The Institute for Leadership and

Transformation (TILT). He consults to leaders and organisations and provides training and supervision to consultants and coaches. He directed two Group Relations Conferences in South Africa, in partnership with the Tavistock Institute. Jean recently travelled from South Africa to Spain by motorcycle, during which he encountered the ingenuity, compassion, and resilience of ordinary people, driven by hope, against many odds. The conference title calls him to find, beneath the rubble of our inner and outer worlds, ways in which to move, breathe, and re-orientate ourselves, together.



Leila Djemal

is an Organisation Development Consultant and Executive Coach. She is Founder and

past Co-Director of TouchOFEK Professional Development Courses, where she also teaches. She has directed Group Relations conferences in Israel and works on staff teams at conferences internationally. She is an Associate Member of A.K. Rice Institute for the Study of Social Systems and a Member and past Board Member of OFEK – The Israel Association for the Study of Group and Organizational Processes. She is thrilled to be part of the Leicester Conference and looking forward to exploring stuckness and what can enable movement and transformation, especially in these times.



Urban Hudlin

Urban is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist graduated from UCD School of Medicine

and maintained a practice in Dublin, Ireland. After completing the Consulting and Change certificate (P3C) and the Dynamics at Board Level at the Tavistock Institute he became a partner with Caribbean Group Relations. This organization has hosted several group relations conferences. Urban is a Dominican priest and principal consultant of Veritas Consultancy. The conference theme provides the opportunity to explore liminality and the potential stuckness. Hope therefore becomes integral to human organizational transformation. I look forward to our time of learning together.



Suma Jacob

draws from over 20 years of group relations experience to co-create innovative

education and healthcare systems and to improve mind-brain-body functioning. She completed her undergraduate, PhD, and MD degrees at The University of Chicago and residency/fellowship training at UCLA, UChicago, and the University of Illinois. As a child-adolescent-adult psychiatrist, she has led biomarker/genetic investigations and clinical trials. Her current research uses data-driven methods and novel technologies to study biobehavioral differences that predict neurodevelopmental outcomes. Suma's neuroscientific investigations of "stuckness" inspire her to explore authority and group-related mechanisms of change that move and motivate organizations.



Saleem Khliefi

BA social work. Group therapist. Organizational consultant and a member of OFEK.

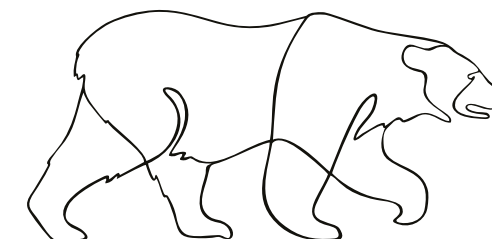
Born and raised in Nazareth, Saleem studied Social Work, worked as Psychotherapist at different psychiatric clinics for children and adolescents; served as professional team advisor and trainer at ELEM training department- A non-profit organization for children and youth in distress. He worked as a project coordinator at "Al-Qaws" -an organization for Arab LGBTQ community. Nowadays working as as a Social Worker at the National Prison services. With decades of working internationally in the Group Relations field, the question of stuckness, movement and hope is particularly relevant to him, with his non-confirmative identity, and in the context of living under ongoing war circumstances, splitting, and what sometimes feels like being stuck in an everlasting conflict. What is the place of hope and the scope of movement in these conditions are questions that keeps Saleem busy on a daily basis.



Dr Debra A Noumair

is Professor of Psychology & Education and Founder & Director of the Executive

MA Program in Change Leadership (XMA) in the Social-Organizational Psychology Program, Department of Organization & Leadership at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, USA. The LC24 title captures the existential challenge of this moment in history. I am animated by the opportunity to study task authority organisation while exploring stuckness, movement, and hope because global engagement in group relations has the potential to yield collective intelligence, a necessity for surviving and thriving that has not yet been realized.





Haritha Sarma

is an organisational Development consultant with more than 25 years of experience.

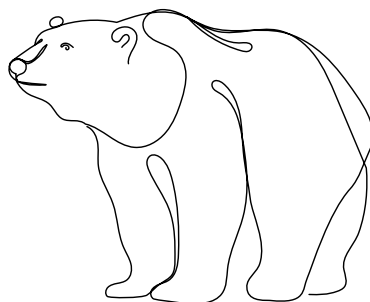
He has extensively worked with diverse groups, organisations, and networks, and addressed themes related to structural poverty, marginalisation, and deepening democracy. He is an Associate Member of Group Relations India. Haritha believes that exploring different aspects of stuckness in itself is a hopeful act which enables movement. In a world where individuals and groups internalise the pressures from institutions and larger systems, studying the deeper psychodynamic processes holds the potential to offer valuable insights. These insights can empower individuals, groups, and institutions to engage with their roles with greater freedom and creativity.



Dr Mónica Rocío Velarde Lazarte

I am a Socioanalyst and a Psychologist based in Geneva, Switzerland. I work

within the Tavistock tradition. I work internationally, with interdisciplinary and inter-institutional teams across different cultures and languages. My professional practice was shaped by the Group Relations Method. This year conference makes explicit reference to the dynamics of stuckness, movement and hope, all different rhythms and patterns of the here-and-now dance of organisational life. I am moved to join you transforming hope into understanding and growth of the system that we are yet to encounter. Founder of Socioanalytic Practice, Co-founder of The Territory- an online platform for the study of group processes. Professional Partner of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations.



*Catch only what you've thrown yourself, all is mere skill and little gain;
but when you're suddenly the catcher of a ball
thrown by an eternal partner
with an accurate and measured swing
towards you, to your centre, in an arch
from the great bridge-building of God:
why catching then becomes a power –
not yours, a world's.*

**From *Solang Du Selbstgeworfnes fängst*
by Rainer Maria Rilke (1922) –
translated from the German**



What happens at the Leicester Conference?

A temporary organisation is created, in which all members and staff co-create the culture and practices of the organisation as it unfolds.

The groups are formed, and events are consulted to by the staff. We look at everything that happens within the organisation and bring to the surface what meanings may be embedded within the group behaviours, as they happen. The conference is designed to surface our assumptions, fantasies and myths about organisational life. As the conference is fully residential, we have the experience of being immersed totally into the life of the organisation, eating, sleeping, and working together for 14 days. There is nothing quite like it.



Sub-conferences Prices

Emerging Sub-conference:

is for people who have never attended a residential group relations conference, or those who choose to return and rediscover the member role afresh.

Deepening Praxis Training Group:

for those who wish to train as group relations conference consultants and those seeking to deepen their organisational consultancy skills. The Deepening Praxis Training Group (DPTG) is for people who have attended at least 2 residential group relations conferences recognised by the Tavistock Institute, at least one of which is a Leicester conference.

Representing outstanding value, the fee includes: 13 night's accommodation, all meals and refreshments and the consultancy of world leaders in the field of systems psychodynamics, organisational consultancy and coaching.

Emerging Sub-conference: £6,250

Deepening Praxis Training Group: £7,000

We offer an Early Bird discount of £500 for applications received before Monday 27 May 2024.

We offer an Early Bird discount of £250 for applications received before Monday 1 July 2024.

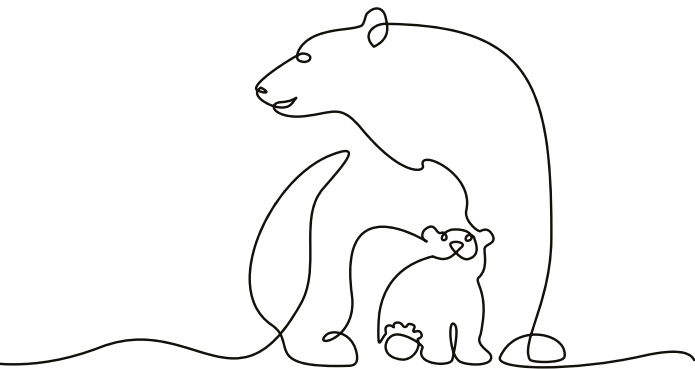
A deposit of £500 is required on application.

Further discounts and bursaries are available.

Those eligible for a discounted fee include:

- Members of our partner organisations
- Alumni of our modular programmes
- Joint Applicants from the same organisation
- Those who work in third sector organisations
- Full time students

Bursaries are available to those with low wealth and income. Bursary applications will be reviewed by the Tavistock Institute, and you may be required to provide accompanying evidence. Please note we have limited bursary spaces.

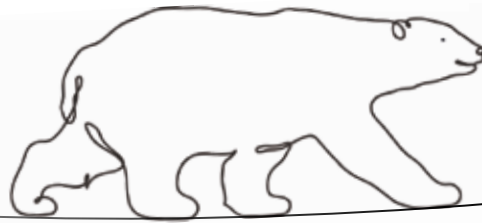


Venue

CIM Moor Hall Cookham, Maidenhead Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Berkshire, SL6 9QH

Located in the idyllic village of Cookham by the River Thames, and close to Heathrow airport, Windsor and Maidenhead, Moor Hall is a business centre in an elegant 19th century manor house, with award-winning hospitality. All bedrooms are ensuite and members can take advantage of fast wi-fi, a lounge bar, quiet work areas and gym. Moor Hall is one hour out of central London, easily accessible by public transport and situated in 9 acres of peaceful Berkshire countryside.





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INSTITUTE

www.tav institute.org

The Tavistock Institute of Human Relations is engaged with evaluation and action research, organisational development and change consultancy, executive coaching and professional development, all in service of supporting sustainable development and maintaining its impact as a UK Charity.