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Understanding TCI as an effectiveness Mantra

Every group, in the course of its development, will need to work at two levels, if it wants to be effective and wants to continue as a group. These levels are the *thematic* and the *psycho-social*. The thematic level refers to all the reasons why the group has been formed at all. Examples of reasons are: to work on a specific curriculum, to develop solution to a problem, to further the personal growth of the members of the group.

Along with the thematic level, it also needs to be sensitive to the psycho-social levels. This level forms the sub-station of the interaction in the group and involves the psychological and social aspects of the interaction at inter-personal level within the group and in relation to the globe.

Defining a thematic issue or focus and working on it effectively is possible only when the psycho-social aspects are well taken care of. This level contains feelings which critically affect the group's performance on the thematic front. For example, the presence of trust or the absence of it in the group is critical. Similarly the security needs, likes and dislikes, values, courage, fear etc experienced by the members of the group, individually and collectively, have a bearing on the performance of the group.

The connection between the two levels can be demonstrated by comparing the structure to an iceberg. Only about one seventh of an iceberg is visible. (The figurative expression 'the tip of an iceberg' is derived from this reality.) The larger part is hidden beneath the water's surface, which makes the tip of the iceberg seem harmless. If we apply this metaphor to groups, then the visible part is the thematic domain, whereas everything else which is difficult to perceive and determine - as in the case of an iceberg - is the social and emotional domain which remain hidden.

TCI sensitizes groups about this reality and encourages the members to confront themselves individually and collectively to become aware of the critically important hidden factors of human interaction. This is one of the ways in which TCI helps groups to become effective. Management experts use this awareness in organization development interventions.