**AGPA Connect 2023 Presenter Information**

**Course Code:** 201

**Course Title:** When the Group is Stuck in NOTHINGNESS (A Suggestion for a 7th Basic Assumption)

**Course Times:** 7:00 - 8:00 AM

**Course Dates:** Thursday, March 9

**Instructors:** Daphna Bahat

**Course Description:** Groups can be stuck when members share an unspoken idea that nothing has any meaning, nothing is worthwhile working or striving for, there is nothing to gain and nothing to learn. This shared unconscious idea functions as a defense against competition or fear of failure, but mainly against learning and change. This open session describes this phenomenon as a new Basic Assumption (BA) adding to Bion’s original BAs. Working through this BA allows the group to resume progress.

**Learning Objectives**

The attendee will be able to:‎

‎1. The learner will identify and detect a powerful phenomenon that serve as a defense against group ‎work.‎

2. The learner will analyze the sources of this phenomenon. ‎

3. The learner will utilize their understanding to handle resistances in the group.‎

**Significant Articles:**

1. Almog, T & Almog, O. (2016) As If There Is No Tomorrow, How Generation Y is Changing the Face of ‎Israel. Ben Shemen: Modan Publishing House. (Hebrew).‎
2. Armstrong, D. (2005) Organisation in the Mind. London: Karnac. pp. 12-13.‎
3. Bion, W. R. (1961) Experiences in Groups and Other Papers, London: Tavistock Publications.‎
4. Freud, A. (1937) The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence, London: Hogarth Press and Institute of ‎PsychoAnalysis
5. Braun, G. (2022). All That We Are. London: Piatkus, Little, Brown Book Group.‎

**Agenda:**

1. NOTHINGNESS as a group phenomenon (13 min, Obj 1+2, Lecture including vignettes from case studies + PowerPoint)

• Explaining what is

• What it may defend against

1. NOTHINGNESS as a societal phenomenon (11 min, Obj 1+2, Lecture including cultural vignettes + video + PowerPoint)
2. Sophisticated maneuvers of NOTHINGNESS (15 min, Obj 1+2, Lecture including a vignette from case study +PowerPoint)
3. Some meta-theoretical considerations (5 min, Obj 1+2, , Lecture + PowerPoint)
4. What do we do with it? (15 min, Obj 3 , Lecture + PowerPoint)
5. Discussion, Q+A (26 min, Obj 1,2,3, Discussion, Q+A)
6. Participant Evaluations (5 min)

**Assessment Questions:**

Question 1 (include possible answers)

1. Nothingness is based on a. The nutrition instinct b. The Death Instinct c. The Oedipus complex

Correct Answer 1

b

Question 2 (include possible answers)

2. Nothingness may be a defence used in highly competitive groups because a. It can give participants a path for a dialogue to own and consolidate the competition in a good non aggressive way b. It brings forwards the most ambitious and competent participants so there is no room for more competition c. It enables participants to feel as if they all got an equal share and as if the competition is redundant because it doesn't worth it.

Correct Answer 2

c

Question 3 (include possible answers)

3. In nothingness the group may a. Admire the leader as if she/he is the only person capable of delivering the group task or taking care of the other group members and nothing she/he says can break that. b. Give the leader a feeling that she/he is not capable of anything and that there is no good in participating in the group. c. Give the leader a feeling that nothing she/he says will break the pair that will procreate the group Messiah.

Correct Answer 3

b

Question 4 (include possible answers)

4. Which of the following quotes is consistent with Nothingness? a. “I am the wisest man alive, for I know one thing, and that is that I know nothing.” (Plato) b. "Vanity of vanities… all is vanity." (Eccl) c. “Always ask yourself: "What will happen if I say nothing?” (Kamand Kojouri)

Correct Answer 4

b

Question 5 (include possible answers)

5. It is argued that the Millennials use Nothingness because a. They see no hope in life b. They have been told they are special and they find it hard to fulfill. c. Both answers are correct.

Correct Answer 5

c

Question 6 (include possible answers)

6. what is Nothingness? a. an unconscious notion of the group that nothing is worthwhile striving or working for b. a bad outcome of the work of the group c. An idea of Bion's, relating to a not good enough container.

Correct Answer 6

a

Question 7 (include possible answers)

1. It is possible that the Nothingness behaviour will be shown and conscious but its emotional sources will be unconscious

Correct Answer 7

T

Question 8 (include possible answers)

8. Nothingness is: a. a new phenomenon that was introduced by the Y generation b. a phenomenon that started in World War II c. a phenomenon from time immortal that is best seen among Millennials

Correct Answer 8

c

Question 9 (include possible answers)

9. Nothingness is a phenomenon that can be seen: a. only in small groups but not in large groups b. only in small groups c. in both small and large groups

Correct Answer 9

c

Question 10 (include possible answers)

10. Best way to deal with Nothingness in a therapeutic group is: a. to strengthen the boundaries of the group b. to interpret the phenomenon and its reasons in the here and now c. to change the group setting

Correct Answer 10

b