



# Group Dynamics; Understanding the Other

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Our goals as leaders, and in further understanding of conflict, is to be able to interpret and see the other as they exist within their own struggles. We are not here to judge, but to partake in the experience of the conflict and to help guide those we lead through it. Psychologist and human behaviorist David Keirsey (1984) wrote, "If I do not want what you want, please try not to tell me what I want is wrong. One thing that is apparent within a globally connected world is the need for greater understanding of those classified as "other." Whether it is the "in-group" describing the "out-group," or the oppressed naming their oppressors, each person or group has been branded with the term "other." By taking the time to better understand the "other," each group has the opportunity to focus their attention on fundamental problems, both locally and globally, to come to a better understanding of what is needed among all.

"When we change the way we communicate, we change society" (Shirky, 2008). This idea is the foundation of a postmodern and poststructuralist approach to the way people interact today. While people are fighting diligently to hold on to the changes that have been made, they must also recognize that the changing environment is precisely the reason for the perpetuation of future interactions. Mediation and other forms of ADR hold a particular interest within this realm (Kovach, 2000). The current atmosphere leads society to think and act in a global understanding, but it is here where direction must be altered in order to perfect progress with respect to social interaction. By increasing social awareness about the power of interaction through ADR, the process of



understanding can be brought into focus. By understanding that society evolves, that same society must also remember two essential points: people embrace their evolving world, and they must remind themselves that while they can effectively communicate with parties across the world, they must also achieve success with the person in front of them.

Interpersonal group dynamics can be a contributing factor throughout one's daily life, and, if it remains solid, it can add to the progression of a changing world. To this same point, a person's acknowledgment of his/her own organizational demands may also be realized with the same fundamental principles that promote such changes (Shirky, 2008). "Group action gives human society its particular character, and anything that changes the way groups get things done will affect society as a whole" (2008). These changes help to produce a greater need for clarity among those in dispute and conflict. As a result of constant interaction, tension is sure to accumulate amid various groups of people for multiple reasons, and it's the role of a leader to mitigate these conflicts before they are left to fester.

## References

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