

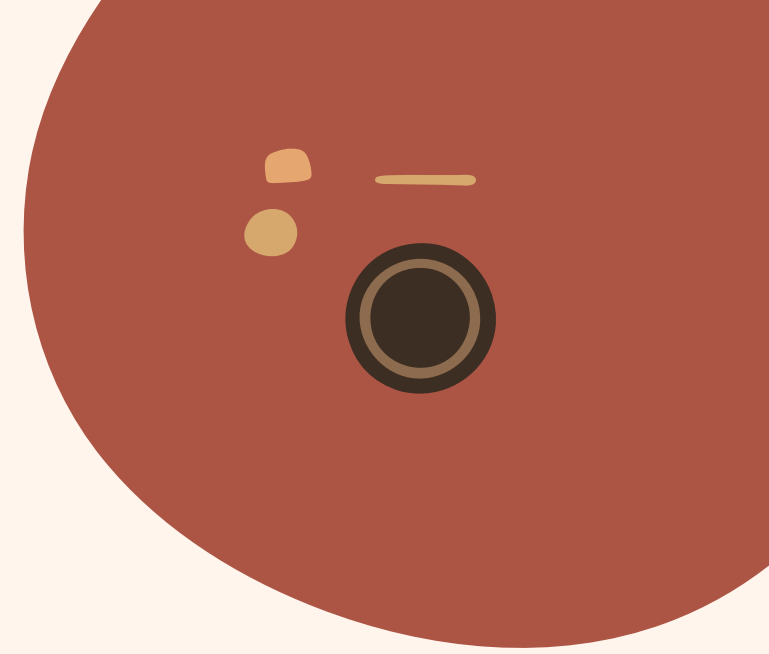
Chapter 19

Andrew Garber

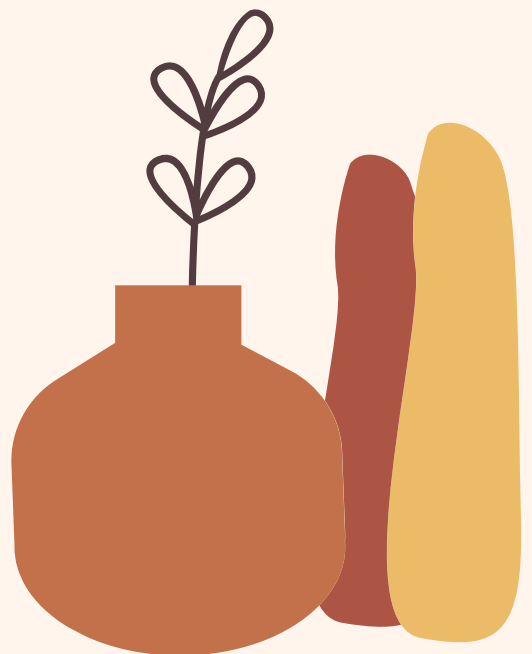
START



What is Chapter 19 About?



**Chapter 19 is about Group
Interaction.**





The Main 3 Parts of the Chapter:

Topic 1: Psychological Groups

Topic 2: Tendencies of Groups

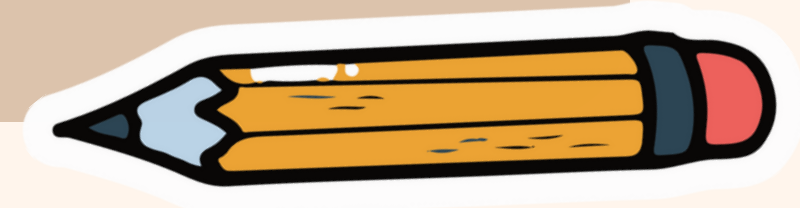
Topic 3: Individuals in Groups



Psychological Groups

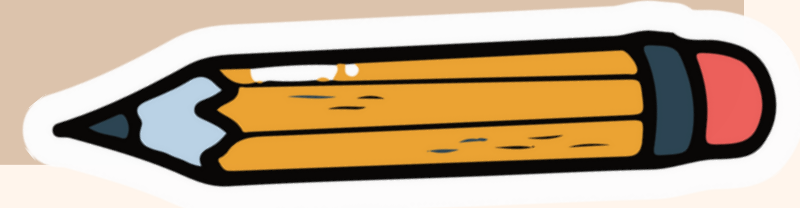
Simply put, a group is a collection of people who interact, share common goals, and influence how each other feel, think, or act. To be truly classified as a group, they must be interdependent - this is why a random crowd isn't a group, but a political party is.

Shared goals are essential to define the character, social norms, and aims of a group. Perhaps more than anything else, having a defined purpose - even if just socialization - makes a group.



Psychological Groups

Groups do not stay together on their own though. Multiple factors work to keep them together - namely, norms, ideology, and individual commitment. The unique norms of a group are an unwritten social code that helps with group cohesion, it ensures that everyone is “speaking the same language”. Ideology is a firmer point than this, groups generally have a common ideology instrumental to the founding of the group and serves as a north star for their action. In addition, a sunk-cost kind of commitment helps to keep groups together. If you are trying to join a frat, the humiliation you endure means you are more likely to be engaged.

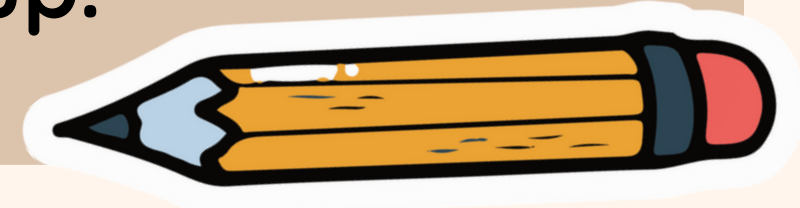


Tendencies of Groups

With any collection of people, the combination of complex psychological interactions and environmental factors will lead to certain tendencies: notable among these are social facilitation and inhibition.

Social facilitation means that you step up, and do things you wouldn't normally do(or do things you WOULD do better) - like going to a crossfit gym instead of Planet Fitness because the environment/group of people will make you work out harder.

The same is true in reverse though - you might be an outspoken person with strong opinions about things, but in a room full of people similarly outspoken but totally ideologically aligned, you might not speak up.



Tendencies of Groups

In addition, certain phenomena seem to happen within groups regardless of their stated purpose(to varying degrees).

- Groupthink is when the social cohesion of a group leads to a failure to consider outside options - when you have worked with/around the same people for a long time, you start to fall into a decision making rut.
- Speaking of decision-making, group polarization is when a discussion of n issue or topic within a group leads to more extreme outcomes when the majority is on one side. They know they are verbally “winning” the argument through force of numbers, so feel naturally compelled to keep pushing that advantage.
- While this isn’t technically a phenomenon, I would be remiss if I didn’t mention leadership in groups. It is **the** critical factor in mission success, regardless of what the mission is. People don’t follow ideas or mission statements, they follow people.

Individuals in Groups

Two wider societal factors happen in any group: conformity and obedience. These two are the killers of spirit and striving, but castigating them entirely is not fair: we all conform AND obey to some extent because it is necessary and helpful to groups and society. Speaking with the same slang is conformity, or speaking with absolute proper grammar is obeying whoever taught you those rules. Why do individuals conform more generally as part of groups (and society as a whole)? A large part of it is that it is just easier - swimming with the current is comfortable, safe, and easy. When we don't conform, we are swimming against the current. It's hard, it's uncomfortable, and it's dangerous. But it's also the only way to pursue a path of self-actualization and individuation.

Individuals in Groups

Obedience can be seen as a form of conformity. We obey rules and authority figures because it can provide structure and safety to ourselves and others. However, these figures can be stifling to the growth of our individuality and the pursuit of our goals.

It is important to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy obedience. Healthy obedience involves following rules and authority figures that align with our values and goals, while unhealthy obedience is simply due to the stature or power of the individual demanding our obedience.

As individuals, we must learn to strike a balance between obedience and autonomy. We should not be afraid to challenge rules and authority when they do not align with our values or goals. We should also strive to be responsible and accountable for our actions, recognizing that our choices have consequences for both ourselves and others.

Additional Sources

Obedience

Conformity

Thus Spoke Zarathustra (Mostly a joke to make myself laugh)