



RCPsych Leadership and Management Fellow Scheme 2025/26

Module 4 pre-work- ' Conscious Leadership-working with the unconscious in us, teams and organisations'

Date: 6 November via Zoom

Dear Fellows,

Welcome to the Conscious Leadership module!

We look forward to meeting you all on the 6th of November 2025 via Zoom.

This module will introduce you to leadership and management from the perspective of complex systems, psychodynamic and group dynamic theories. Over the course of the month, you will learn to apply these conceptual frameworks to leading and managing teams and organisations.

During this module you will:

- Learn about and apply complex systems theory to teams and organisations.
- Explore psychodynamic approaches to leadership and management, the development of psychic defences, and their implications for team and organisational dynamics.
- Think about group functioning, including Bion's concepts of work groups and anti-groups.

- You will experience Tuckman's stages of group development (forming, storming, norming, performing) and hopefully recognise their practical relevance.

The module emphasises practical application through:

- Small group work to help you apply theory to realistic leadership scenarios.
- An experiential group exercise ("surviving on the moon") designed to deepen your understanding of group dynamics.
- A detailed case study on the events at Edenfield in Manchester, which you will discuss and analyse in small groups.

Please view and print both case studies and the NASA Moon Walk handout before the module as a physical copy will be needed during the session:

[Case Study 1](#)

[Case Study 2](#)

[NASA Moon Walk](#)

Pre-reading materials please view here:

1. ***The Ailment by Thomas Main*** which examines how certain patient groups impact individuals and teams and disrupt team dynamics.
2. ***Social Systems as a Defence Against Anxiety by Isabel Menzies Lyth*** which explores nurses' psychic defences in response to anxiety and distress triggered by looking after ill patients in a general hospital setting.
3. ***The Impossibility of Working in the Current NHS*** by Rachel Gibbons which discusses contemporary psychodynamic and systemic issues within the NHS.
4. ***The Edenfield reports***, along with additional links below for context, to support your final small group session.

['Toxic culture' of abuse at mental health hospital revealed by BBC secret filming - BBC News](#)

<https://www.communitycare.co.uk/2024/02/16/leaders-ignored-mental-health-hospital-staffs-concerns-for-years-before-abuse-scandal-finds-review>

[Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust - Overview - Care Quality Commission](#)

End of module assessment

By the end of November, you will need to complete a reflective piece (500–1,000 words) in which you will be asked to apply the theories discussed (complex systems, psychodynamic and group dynamics) to your own workplace and organisation. You should reflect on your team's and organisation's functioning and propose practical leadership & management strategies using the principles you've learnt.

Please contact lmfs@rcpsych.ac.uk if you have any questions.

Ruslan & Katy