

questions through case awards.<sup>3</sup> One case teacher commented, e.g., that cases should be “about a hot company. Per definition a company that would hire our students” (Radel 2015a). In sum, a single definition of a good case as well as of good case teaching might not be possible at all, and the title of Naumes and Naumes’ book might be the best way to describe it: “*The Art & Craft of Case Writing*” (2006, italics by J. R.).

According to the synopsis above, the (Harvard) case method revolves around issues regarding case selection and developments, case-related teaching approaches, and whether or not to use “recipes,” i.e., teaching notes. Even if a case discussion or case teaching could be influenced or modified to deal with more up-to-date scenarios, the (Harvard) case method itself implies a discussion about a distant situation – the case – and its relationship to others, namely the protagonists within the case. However, to my knowledge (J. R.), the (Harvard) case method does not explicitly facilitate reflection on the here and now of the teaching situation. Nonetheless, the distance of the concept makes it suitable for groups that are not used to reflecting deeply on their own behavior. This, in turn, can help students take their first steps toward the more emotionally challenging reflection facilitated by the group dynamics (GD) approach. The following chapter therefore examines the (Harvard) case method from a group dynamics perspective.

### 7.3 The (Harvard) case method from a group dynamics perspective

From a group dynamics perspective, there may be blind spots associated with the (Harvard) case method. The term “blind spot” refers to the place where the optic nerve passes through the retina (Rookes et al. 2007, 8). This aspect of human visual perception<sup>4</sup> can only be recognized by putting the viewer in a certain setting (Fig. 35).

Fig. 35: Visual exercise to reveal the blind spot of the human eye.



Close your right eye. Hold the image about 20 inches [50 cm, approx. arm’s length] away. With your left eye, look at the black dot. Slowly bring the image closer while looking at the black dot. At a certain distance, the black beam will appear solid. For the right eye turn the page 180° and close your left eye. (Chudler, E. 2016)

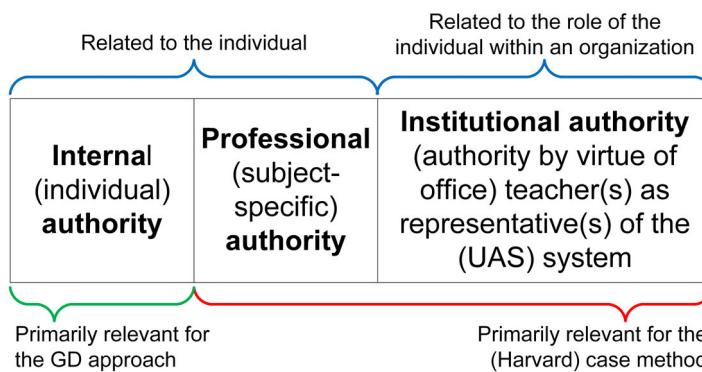
Metaphorically, the term »blind spot,« as applied to individual (psychological) and/or social systems, means that – in the here and now – what is unconscious cannot become conscious (Schuster 2016b, 11, 17).

<sup>3</sup> One case teacher suggested to Radel (2015b) that there might be a bias in the awarded cases. Women are usually underrepresented in written cases, as well as small and medium-sized European companies. This could just be a reflection of the real world (fewer women in CEO positions, more companies outside the EU etc.) or a real bias. This is a question that cannot be discussed here in detail, but is worth looking at in future research.

<sup>4</sup> It cannot see what cannot be seen.

For my reflection, I assume that the teacher who uses the (Harvard) case method is a qualified specialist regarding the context and content of the case; therefore, he or she possesses professional authority. Since the case teacher acts within the context of the university system, he or she has a certain role according to this system, and therefore exercises authority by virtue of office (Figure 36). I argue that exercising one's professional and institutional authority without questioning it is one of these blind spots. One consequence of this is that the presuppositions of professional and institutional authority are implicitly transferred to the students. In other words, there is an unconscious standardization of the students' minds.

Fig. 36: Primarily relevant types of authority regarding the HCM and the GDa.



Source: Self-created

The following table shows characteristics of the HCM compared to a GDa:

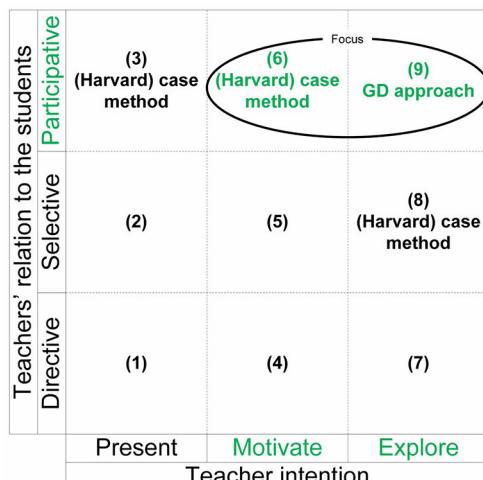
In contrast to the HCM, the main concern of the GDa is to cross the boundary of professional and institutional authority and to introduce internal authority, which I will discuss in detail in Sections 0 and 0. The basic idea is to identify and address psychological and/or sociological blind spots regarding authority and the related unconscious and/or subconscious presuppositions when exploring the teacher-student relationship in the context of the educational organization.

Following Heindl (2007, 13ff.), I distinguish among nine types (1–9) of teacher relationships and intentions with respect to students (Fig. 37).

- (1) *Directive presentation*: The teacher talks about something in front of students without involving the audience at all. The focus lies on the content.
- (2) *Selective presentation*: The teacher talks about something in front of students, and selectively involves a few students by letting them ask questions and then answering them.
- (3) *Participative presentation*: The teacher facilitates communication about something he or she possesses expertise in. The whole audience (students) is more or less actively involved. This is an area where the (Harvard) case method could be used.

- (4) *Directive motivation*: The teacher talks to students, e.g., with the intention of motivating them to perform better in the next semester. The teacher's goal is to change the audience's attitude or behavior.
- (5) *Selective motivation*: The teacher wants to initiate a change and talks to students, selectively addressing one or the other directly; disciplining them is the main goal.
- (6) *Participative motivation*: The teacher facilitates action that involves everyone; all students are an active part of the event. The power of groups is used to fuel the process. The teacher merely guides the process, using primarily his or her professional and/or institutional authority. This is also an area where the (Harvard) case method might be found.
- (7) *Directive exploration*: The teacher talks about something in front of students without involving the audience at all. The teacher's intention is to lead (direct) his or her audience to insight. The focus is on gaining knowledge.
- (8) *Selective exploration*: Students volunteer to experience self-awareness or to expand their behavioral repertoire, i.e., the rest of the audience observes, the teacher facilitates. Using the (Harvard) case method, the teacher could present a case and ask students to volunteer to take on the roles and role play sequences from the case.
- (9) *Participative exploration*: The teacher facilitates an open process. Students and the teacher work together on new approaches and insights. The process is structured by the teacher but unbiased as to the outcome (Schuster 2016b, 18). This is the field of the group dynamics approaches of T-Group, O-Lab, and Group Relation Conference, as discussed in Section 0.

Fig. 37: Areas of the (Harvard) case method and the GD approach



Source: Based on: Heindl, A. (2007, 12–9), Theatrale Intervention [Theatrical intervention, translated by R. J. S.] Vienna: Dissertation University of Vienna.

Looking at Figure 37, the focus of this paper is on fields six (6) and nine (9). Field 6 represents educational approaches typified by the (Harvard) case method, based on the implicit professional and/or institutional authority of the teacher(s); it is thus more normative (see Chapter 4). Field 9 represents a GD approach, focusing primarily on internal (individual) authority.

To provide a better understanding of the concept of the different types of authority, the next section focuses on a model from depth psychology.

*Table 4: Characteristics of HCM compared to GDa.*

HCM (field six (6))	GDa (field nine (9))
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Crystalline/stable/condensed experience revisited</li> <li>· Focus on the case (case-centered)</li> <li>· Chosen according to the specific needs of the class</li> <li>· Has the "borders" the case writer (teacher) wants it to have</li> <li>· Rather dissociated and discussed on a meta-level</li> <li>· Situation is less controllable than in a traditional lecture, but more than in a group dynamics experience</li> <li>· Participants should emotionally attach</li> <li>· Slowed down/frozen in time/repeated, which provides students the ability to analyze and weigh options and decide accordingly</li> <li>· Interpersonal dynamics of the cases may be hard to grasp/analyze due to a lack of context</li> <li>· Often a case is provided by a third-party distributor (e.g., The Case Centre, Harvard Business Publishing etc.)</li> <li>· Usually accompanied by a teaching note or comments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Fluid (process-centered)</li> <li>· Focus on the here and now of the group process</li> <li>· Cannot be stored or transferred</li> <li>· Limited ability to influence the content that occurs</li> <li>· Difficult to control</li> <li>· Participants are involved directly; there is no way around that – whatever happens can become part of the reflection</li> <li>· Emotions arise without being planned in any particular way</li> <li>· Interpersonal dynamics are visible, due to the analysis of the here and now</li> <li>· No case is provided, no third parties are involved</li> <li>· Accompanied by a minimum of background information, e.g., a theory about specific matters that fits what happened during the process (authority, observed behavior etc.)</li> </ul>

Source: Self-created

## 7.4 Internal (individual) authority and its relationship to the True Self, EQ, and teaching

Internal (individual) authority and its relationship to the True Self, emotional intelligence (EQ), and teaching are core elements of the argument for the combined teaching