The book represents a distillation of the authors’ long experience in the field of group analytic practice and training in the United Kingdom and internationally, offering practitioners, teachers and students of psychotherapy a detailed and comprehensive account of group analysis. The book demystifies the workings of analytic groups and looks at the great stretch of issues and tasks confronting the therapist in the practice of group analytic psychotherapy. Each stage in the process is fully discussed: the assessment and preparation of patients for groups, dynamic administration, beginning and ending a group, and the introduction of new members into an established group.

A chapter on psychopathology gives a picture of the main psychiatric conditions which the group therapist is likely to encounter, and offers clear guidelines on how to manage them in a group context. An exposition on the group in full flow provides an unusual insight into the processes which constitute the analytic culture, including the analysis of dreams, the art of interpreting, use of the transference and countertransference, and the place of play, humour and metaphor.

Difficult and challenging scenarios, such as dropping out, scapegoating, the silent group member, and monopolisation of the group are treated in depth, as are Large Groups, homogeneous groups, groups for children and adolescents, family therapy, groups in non-clinical settings, and the supervision of group therapy. The impingement of the therapist’s own personal issues is also given attention.

The authors have flanked their narrative with accounts of the historical, social and cultural origins of group analysis, and a vision of the future provided by the newer strands of thinking in the field. The text is enlivened by colourful vignettes drawn from the authors’ own experiences, and by sharply focused dialogues between the two authors, designed to illustrate their contrasting and complementary perspectives.