DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 085 619 CG 008 525

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TITLE The Continuum Center for Women: Education Volunteerism Employment.
INSTITUTION Oakland Univ., Rochester, Mich. Continuum Center for Women.
SPONS AGENCY Kellogg Foundation, Battle Creek, Mich.
PUB DATE Aug 73
NOTE 72p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Conferences; *Counseling; Employment Opportunities; *Females; *Leadership Training; Management; Program Design; *Psychological Characteristics; Volunteers; Womens Studies

ABSTRACT

This report on educational programs for mature women describes in detail, how courses can be established, staffed, financed, and kept flexible and responsive to the needs of a variety of women. The program includes the following five components: (1) psychological testing and counseling; (2) educational advising; (3) volunteer service advising; (4) employment advising; and (5) orientation interviewing. Besides offering a variety of courses, the program sponsors women's conferences, leadership training for discussion leaders, and life planning for women. The report concludes with some considerations for management. (Author/LAA)

THE CONTINUUM CENTER FOR WOMEN

EDUCATION VOLUNTEERISM EMPLOYMENT

A Report of the Development and Experiences of the Center
at Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan
for
THE W. K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION, BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN

THE CONTINUUM CENTER FOR WOMEN
Education
Volunteerism
Employment

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Published by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation,
Battle Creek, Michigan
August 1973

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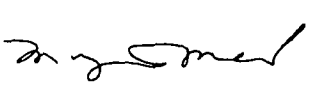
FOREWORD

This is a responsible and illuminating report of one of the pioneer ventures in women's education — long before the present acceleration of academic courses for and about women had erupted. It shows in detail how such courses can be set up, staffed, recruited for, financed, and kept flexible and responsive to the different women who come to them, as times change and feminine consciousness expands. It should provide a really good guide to any institution considering what it should do in this new field, which overlaps with continuing education, vocational guidance, counseling, women's studies, and career testing and guidance. Its wide ramifications mean that this report should be useful to many departments and for quite a while to come.



Margaret Mead
The American Museum of Natural History

PROLOGUE

A group of us who were staff members of the Division of Continuing Education at Oakland University in the early 1960's became interested in the modern dilemma of American middle-class women. They were faced with a difficult transition from their shrinking housewife-mother role to some kind of more meaningful, more rewarding participation in twentieth century life; and few of them knew how to make such a transition. We developed the Continuum Center for Women to help women cope, individually, with this dilemma.

The Center is active today and growing in the services it is offering. The period under review in this brochure is approximately 1965-72, a period covering one major change in the Center's program and many adaptations to varying community needs.

The Continuum Center has combined professional service and research. The visible part of our program has offered various kinds of resources for assisting individual women make their personal transitions. Our research has consisted of a continuing study of the needs of our clients, a continuing evaluation of the effectiveness of our program in meeting client needs, and a continuing revision of our actual program in line with our findings.

This document has been written for people who want to know how our program was conceived and developed. It will be of particular interest to those who wish to know, in some detail, what the program's adult educators, social workers, clinical psychologists, personnel-management specialists, and counselors learned. What did the members of this staff of professionals find to be the real problems of suburban housewife-mothers? How did the staff first try to meet the needs of their clients? What did the staff learn from early experiences and how did their findings cause them to change the program? What factors led subsequent staff members to broaden the field of clients and the scope of services? How did the staff solve administrative problems of university relationships, financing, and evaluation?

We directed the major thrust of our 1965-72 program toward the needs of the housewife-mother, but we have found that other groups, such as the newly divorced and the recently bereaved, are faced with a similar need for help in making transitions from diminishing roles to new and growing ones, or from familiar patterns of living to radically different life styles.

The Continuum Center is not dedicated to getting women out of the home, but to serve each individual by helping her achieve the goals she has set for herself. Emphasis has been placed throughout the program on the individual person — her problems, her identity, her goals, her first steps toward achieving her goals. We have never

had an average client. We have never dealt with faceless categories.

The gratitude of individual women encouraged us to continue. We had many heartwarming successes; but there was one group of women about whom we felt a sense of failure. They were the ones immobilized in indecision. Our program was able to give some help to some of them, but we hope other programs will go further in the investigation of commitment, motivation, and the paralyzing effect of conflicting purposes.

The tremendous scope of the need for assistance by the millions of women who must make difficult transitions in this changing world overwhelms the imagination. Perhaps this document will illuminate the situation and suggest services which might help to meet part of the need. We hope it will also stimulate widespread interest in the provisions of broader, more accessible services for all adults in transition.

Priscilla Jackson
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1965-1969

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Staff Counselor

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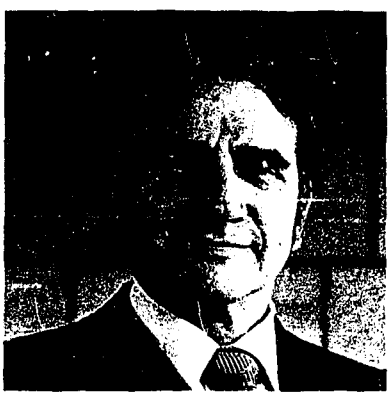
Staff Psychologist



Lowell Eklund
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Eleanor Driver
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Sylvia Nelson
Administrative Secretary

Gerald Self
Staff Psychologist

Betty White
Program Coordinator & Supervisor of Experimental "Olders" Program

INTRODUCTION

When the public first began discussing women's psycho-social characteristics, the family reacted, understandably, with distress and confusion.

"My wife depressed? Surely not! She has everything I can give her."

"Mom unhappy? Golly, we all try to be good to her!"

Mother, herself, was confused. She offered a guilty apology to the world in general and to her family in particular. She tried to explain: "I know I should be grateful for my good fortune. I really am. It's just that — oh, I don't know! I'm sure I'll be all right in a little while."

Today her explanation is less apologetic and more coherent because she has been reading the charges and challenges of women liberationists, but in the early 1960's she had heard very little about "Women's Lib." At that time a few of her sisters were testing their strength in civil rights marches and demonstrations and several were establishing careers in the business and professional world; but she was, for the most part, a housewife. Her college diploma lay in a bottom drawer. Her typewriter was rusty; her teacher's certificate inactive. Her older children were engrossed with school, and her husband was working earnestly for his next promotion. Mother, long ago, mastered the art of dusting furniture, chatting with the neighbors, putting dishes into the dishwasher, and shopping for the best buys in food and window curtains. She knew — and suspected many other people knew — that all this could be done with a small part of her time and still smaller part of her mind. And "all this" was actually shrinking, anyway. The modern house needed less care and convenience foods turned her cooking skill into a gourmet's hobby.

A woman's world had changed in many ways since the day of her wedding. When World War II came to an end, she and her husband turned their energies to fulfilling their dream of home and family. She pictured herself as the central figure in a romantic, domestic idyl, but she found mid-twentieth-century conditions different from those she remembered in her childhood home. Her husband seldom came home for lunch. The family income was earned by work which he did in "the plant" or in "the office downtown" or "on the road." Her day was devoted to caring for the children and the mechanized house. She was forced to admit to herself, even if she did not complain to others, that her isolated routine was dull, boring, stultifying. She had always been a courageous human being. She had also been a mature and responsible person, ready to solve her own problems. She must keep herself busy, she

reasoned. Since her children were her most important responsibility, she would do an especially good job as a mother. Therefore, she bore more and more children and reared them more and more meticulously. For a short time she basked in the approval of a tradition-loving society.

But a new cycle of change was to shrink her world even more severely. Social scientists began to point with alarm to the population explosion, and laymen agreed that we were reproducing ourselves too rapidly. One or two children became the desirable family size. Then psychologists frowned upon Mother's anxious attitudes toward child-rearing and blamed her for the emotional problems of her school-age children. She began to fear that she no longer had a proud, person-expanding role in the new world. She and her husband agreed, of course, that they must give their one or two children love and guidance and a warm, secure home; but her role in this was to be a quiet, enabling role; it was to be played down, subordinated to her other interests. Her other interests? She had given up "her other interests" long ago in order to be the kind of mother, wife, and homemaker she had thought she should be. Her high school and college interests were rusty and long untested. She knew the world had been going through much change. Her husband, for example, had many new skills. He understood many things that she had not had the opportunities or incentives for learning. She feared that she could no longer march in step with the world outside her home. Her confidence evaporated. What should she do now? What could she do now?

She thought about the many women who were fitting happily into the mid-twentieth-century housewife-mother role. The isolated routine was, to them, peace and quiet. It offered them the freedom they wanted to pursue home-based interests which seemed to grow with the years. But she knew she was different from them. She was an individual just as her children were individuals.

"I'm not better or worse than other women," she thought to herself; "I'm just myself. And I have problems. What am I going to do?"

In the early 1960's few people cared what a woman did so long as she refrained from complaining. The psycho-social characteristics of her teenage son and daughter were the fashion of the moment. Early-childhood studies received generous public interest and financial support. Minority groups were featured in news reports. Few people thought about Mother at all.

Women's psycho-social characteristics, however, did interest a small group of social scientists in a young university located just east of Pontiac, Michigan, and on the edge of the suburbs of Detroit. Oakland University was, from the day of its founding in 1959, innovative. It was, therefore, logical that the Division of Continuing Education of Oakland University should be open to innovative approaches to adult education. Members of the Continu-

ing Education staff were able to look at the immediate neighborhood of the University. They saw, for example, college-bound students who needed a resident summer program to sharpen their study skills, and the Division promptly organized the Pre-College Study Center. They saw wage-earners in need of up-dated skills, and the Division offered a variety of courses in business, engineering, and special skills. They saw the vague but real and complex need of great numbers of middle-class mature housewife-mothers.

A series of conferences brought that need into clearer focus. Many mature women, most of them filling the traditional role of housewife-mother, needed help in understanding themselves and in taking a first step toward a more rewarding participation in a changing world. The story of how thousands of women found help at Oakland University spread rapidly; and, with a few other early programs for women, it stimulated similar efforts across the United States.

ANNUAL CONFERENCES ON WOMEN

The series of conferences, held on the Oakland University campus, probed the needs of mature women in the Detroit area. The first "Annual Conference on Women" was held in May 1963. It was followed by two others in the spring of each of the two following years. Each conference was planned by the Director of Conferences of the Division of Continuing Education who enlisted the help of a group of articulate and self-analytical women from the surrounding community. Together they explored pertinent questions and thought through the many possible questions which women could raise during such meetings. Among these women who represented the surrounding community were homemakers; officers of such organizations as the American Association of University Women, the League of Women Voters, and the Junior League; and professionals in business, industry, and government. On the basis of their planning, speakers and resource people were assembled and publicity was circulated for the first conference.

More than 300 women attended that first meeting. Vital discussions revealed, dramatically, the predicament of educated, talented, mature women. Out of this conference came a conviction, which was reinforced by the 1964 and 1965 conferences, that educational services were not enough to help mature women realize their potential. Mature women needed guidance toward self-understanding. They needed to cope with their guilts, to face their fears, to define their vague restlessness. They needed to talk with others who felt similar uneasiness. They also needed specific, practical aid in the resolution of their individual time-use conflicts.

The three Conferences on Women were addressed by psychologists, sociologists, educators, an anthropologist, and representa-

tives of business, volunteer programs, and government. The panel discussions were chaired by area leaders with experience in labor unions, university counseling, professional placement, hospital administration, social work, and in many other fields. The major topic of these conferences and a few selected lecture and panel titles reveal some of the thinking which shaped the future center for women at Oakland University:

Woman's Place in this Perplexing Century
"The Restless Mood"
"Woman Enroute from Farm to What Future?"
"What *Is* a Woman Like?"
"What *Should* She Be?"

Woman's Choices in This Confusing Century
"The Identity Problem: A Woman's View of Herself"
"The Search for the Choice"
"How to Accept the Realities of the Choice and Let the Responsibilities Go"

Women's Alternatives in Amiable America:
The Perimeters:
"The Person"
"The Pattern"

The Potentialities:
"The Home, of course, and—"
"Education"
"Volunteer Work"
"Employment"

Education
"Opportunities at Area Universities"

Volunteer Work:
"The Volunteer Herself"
"How to Handle Volunteers Intelligently"
"There are Many Needs"

Employment
"Emerging from the Home into the Working World"
"Where Are the Jobs for Women Nationally?"
"Where Are the Jobs for Women Locally?"

A 4-day conference in 1965 introduced to the public several of the ideas that were, by that time, being woven into specific plans for a proposed center for women. The conference explored the uses of testing in self-discovery. Investigation into identity was begun and possibilities in education, volunteer work, and employment were defined. The concept of "the discontinuous life" was presented with the following "Eight Stages of a Woman's Life":

STAGE 1 — The teen-ager.
STAGE 2 — The unmarried working woman.
STAGE 3 — Married woman with a job, no children.
STAGE 4 — Woman with pre-school age children.
STAGE 5 — Woman with children in school.
STAGE 6 — Woman whose children have left home.
STAGE 7 — Woman with retired husband.
STAGE 8 — Widowhood.

THE CONTINUUM CENTER FOR WOMEN

The enthusiasm which greeted the annual Conferences on Women encouraged the Division of Continuing Education to offer an experimental program for women. A search for funding led Oakland University officials to the philanthropic agencies which might be expected to invest "risk money" in a challenging educational experiment. In May, 1965, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Mich., granted the program three years of financial assistance. (An additional four-year grant in 1968 stimulated further development of the program.) Oakland University opened the Continuum Center for Women in 1965.

A staff was selected on the basis of the following criteria: (1) expertise in subject matter areas, such as psychology, advising, social work, or personnel work, rather than a generalized M.A. in counseling; (2) a previous awareness and an immediate response to and sympathy for the predicament of the mature woman; and (3) experience in counseling together with an interest in counseling as a field of study, and an intent to pursue the interest through attendance at lectures and in courses and independent study. Great care was taken in the selecting. In fact, 85 candidates were considered for the original staff of one part-time and five full-time members.

Two years later the 1967-68 catalog of the Continuum Center listed the following professional staff positions:

Director
Psychologist
Education Adviser
Volunteer Service Adviser
Employment Adviser
Orientation Interviewer
Service from two members of the Division of Continuing Education Public Relations and Marketing Staff
Registrar

This staff received part-time assistance from three secretaries, an "Associate Staff" of two psychologists, a director of university extension services, and a moderator-speaker. It was also assisted by a "Volunteer Staff" of 20 discussion leaders and 8 research abstractors.

The 1968-69 catalog listed the same professional staff positions with two exceptions: the two members of the Division of Continuing Education staff were no longer assisting, and the title "Orientation Interviewer" became "Counselor" with two people employed in this role. Volunteer discussion leaders now numbered 45; 9 other volunteers served as historian, key punchers, and research abstractors.

By 1971 a bulletin listed the staff positions as the following:

Director
Counselor
Staff Psychologist
Administrative Assistant
Departmental Secretary
Public Relations Officer

Part-time assistance to this 1971 staff was provided by an "Adjunct Staff" of 15 program coordinators and 77 group leaders. An early 1972 bulletin added the following seven positions to those listed in 1971: three consulting psychologists, two advisers for the "Men's Program," a "Special Consultant," and a "Co-ordinator of Courses and Special Programs."

The name of the program grew out of the concept of a woman's life being "discontinuous." The eight stages of a woman's life were defined as marking the ebb and flow of her responsibility, the breaks in the continuum of her life. A logical sequence of thought led to the designation of the program as a "Continuum Center for Women." There a woman could find help in making a coherent whole out of the various stages of her life.

The Detroit area, and soon a broader public, asked, "What is the Continuum Center?" Speakers representing the Center sought brief answers, which would also be accurate, as in these examples:

> The Continuum Center is for women aged 21 to 75 who want to change their life style.
> The Continuum Center . . . a place for normal people to come for help in coping with the developmental crises of life.
> The Continuum Center for Women . . . brings together all possible counseling and programming for the educational, professional and volunteer interests of the mature women seeking opportunities to serve herself and her society.

The news media described the Center in such statements as the following:

> *Before the days when Women's Lib had become a household word and NOW was unheard of, Oakland University recognized the fact that many women were searching for an identity . . . At first, only a single course was offered — the start of the Investigation into Identity program. This proved so popular that it is repeated several times each year and at various locations. The course involves testing and counseling. . . . (the Continuum Center) was dedicated to helping women in their middle years find themselves and decide what direction they wished to take from then on . . . "Women who come, take home what they have learned and it affects the whole family."* — Pontiac Press

> *With more women, especially older ones, entering the labor force every year . . . many women feel the need for more education — to update their skills, get a more interesting job, or make more money . . . As for the academic ability of mature women — they are shaking up the college-age undergraduates by raising the scholarship curve and setting an example their young counterparts may well envy . . . [The] overall average grade point of the over-30 women at Oakland University is 3.36, a solid B-plus, while the over-all undergraduate average hovers around 2.6 (B-minus).* — Detroit Free Press

> *A NEW BREED OF MIDDLE-CLASS WOMEN EMERGING: A rash of educational programs ranging from the scholarly Radcliffe Institute to self-centered, therapeutic workshops (like the Investigation into Identity course at the Continuum Center for Women of Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan) to fly-by-night guidance services, have blossomed and wilted around her.* — The New York Times

> *. . . the Investigation into Identity program . . . will explore personal behavior as well as educational and vocational testing to help each woman live a meaningful life geared to the 20th century . . .* — Detroit Free Press

THE EARLY CLIENTS

Who came to the Center?

Mature women came. During the first three years, three-fourths of them were between 30 and 50 years of age; 82% were married and had 2.6 children per family.*

Well-educated women came. One-fourth were college graduates, 36% had some college education and 5% had done some graduate study. Only 4% had not completed high school.

Comparatively affluent women came. One-fourth listed a family income of $16,000 to $25,000, 22% had a family income of $10,000 to $13,000, and 10% listed a family income of $25,000 to $50,000.

And of these mature, well-educated, affluent women, 86% stated that their major reason for coming to the Center was to gain knowledge and evaluation of themselves.

The nature of the population was of particular interest to two groups: (1) the women who were contemplating participation in the program and who wanted to know the kind of group they would be joining; and (2) the educators, counselors, psychologists, and special advisers who were considering launching programs for the adult woman.

The general public also wanted to know who came to the Continuum Center. Women who asked questions and sought answers were beginning to be news. Such women were interesting to other women who were restless and questioning and to the men who watched and listened; they were disturbing to those who feared change. The climate was favorable for studies and news reports on the clients, and many of both were produced.

One professional paper grew out of the opportunity for observation which was inherent in the work of a clinical psychologist, Dr. Gerald Self, on the staff of the Continuum Center. Dr. Self wrote about three psycho-social characteristics he observed among the clients of the Center. The following excerpts from his paper not only illustrate the studies which were made of Continuum Center clients, but support the 1963-65 hypotheses which led to the opening of the experimental Center.

> [Of the three psycho-social characteristics:] . . . the most common characteristic of this group of middle-class American housewife-mothers is the pervasive lack of confidence in their own ability. Such lack of confidence . . . is generated from the sparse utilization of talents in a competitive and rewarding environment; an environment that the home, due to over-exposure and boredom, no longer provides.

* Client statistics are taken from a summary representing 800 of the 1400 women who came to the Center between July, 1965 and July, 1968.

American housewives have relatively little feedback concerning their own real abilities, and lack external criteria for evaluating themselves. Most women that I have interviewed have not fully utilized intellectual, academic or employment skills for approximately 15 to 20 years . . .

The sapped confidence of the American housewife-mother contributes to the second major psycho-social condition of this population — depression. Relatively few women . . . recognize [as depression] their chronic physical complaints, their inability to mobilize energy, their waning interest in long-held activities and friends, their lack of zest in living, and their general reluctance to participate fully in the world outside the home. In clinical terms this is a mild to moderate, but fairly pervasive, depressive syndrome . . .

The third major psychological characteristic of the middle-class American housewife-mother is the identity crisis. This condition seems to arise because these women have devoted the major portion of their energies to the attainment of other people's goals. The husband's occupational advancement and the children's academic progress often assume prime importance. After years of such sacrifice many women lose sight of their own needs and long-term goals . . . and a sense of 'directionlessness' prevails . . .

[These] three common psycho-social characteristics, though certainly not pleasant experiences, do serve a very positive function. The anxiety and discomfort arising out of such conditions stimulate movement; the need to change and to attain, in the women's own words, 'something more meaningful.'

[Two typical reactions:] As the women consider a more active existence outside the home, they experience certain typical reactions and employ certain defensive maneuvers. Almost universally, 'women on the move' experience a great sense of guilt concerning what I shall call the American dream . . . [They] have attained the material components of this dream and usually recognize all too well the dear price that their spouses have paid and continue to pay for these accomplishments. Yet they still recognize some gnawing sense of incompleteness and voice in their lives. They ask what is wrong and answer that it is their own selfishness and lack of appreciation.

The second major reaction . . . concerns . . . dependence and independence. Activities outside the home threaten to upset the dependent relationship [with her husband] which the woman has enjoyed and deeply needs to maintain . . . Ambition is termed aggressiveness [by her] and the emotionally healthy desire to use talents and energies to the fullest is seen as undesirable. Typically, the male is not greatly threatened by his wife's activity; . . . family members usually share the emotional and interpersonal rewards of the woman's accomplishments and are positively affected by her growing sense of worth and well-being. . .

[Three defensive mechanisms:] Typical defensive mechanisms that women use during this frightening time of change and possible growth [include] obsessional introspection . . . [evidenced by] endless philosophical inquiry concerning their role in life and contribution to society. . .

A second defensive maneuver is clinically identified as projection . . . or the tendency to blame others for one's own thoughts and feelings . . . The client may say, 'I would love to go to college, but George won't *let me*' . . .

[A third] defense mechanism involves retaining or reverting to earlier forms of secure adjustment. Faced with the anxious possibility of change, many women find routine housework suddenly comforting. College-educated and intellectually capable individuals are attracted to low stress positions far beneath their capabilities . . . [Such] defense mechanisms reduce anxiety, but the price is immobilization.

I should like to stress the positive dimension which typically accrues from the crises of this period. In effect, the turmoil and stress in the lives of many American women in their middle years become the motivating force behind their effort, often desperate, to change their situation. Roughly two-thirds of the women I have observed do make some change in their life style and report that their general sense of well-being and real gratification from the environment is thus enhanced.

Planning meeting with Continuum Center staff and group leaders, 1969.

CHAPTER I

THE BASIC PROGRAM: INVESTIGATION INTO IDENTITY

"Help is a search." Believing this to be true, the specialists in adult education who designed the program of the Continuum Center built a framework for a search. Within this framework clients of the Center and staff members could investigate together the individual identity of each client, study her resources, and find her most promising first steps toward a more meaningful life.

"Tentativeness and innovative experimentation are characteristic of the most productive helping relationship." The experience of the Center proved the truth of this statement. The Center's basic framework for helping mature women, the course called "Investigation into Identity," was always a tentative program. It was changed when feedback from clients and observation of the community indicated another variation would improve the helpfulness of the relationship between client and staff.

"Help is most helpful when . . . giver and receiver . . . have reciprocal feelings of confidence, warmth, and acceptance." The presence of such reciprocal feelings was evident throughout the association of Center clients and staff; the success of the "help" was affirmed by enthusiastic and grateful responses from clients. The mutual search by clients and staff members for personal identity and for better ways of helping mature women live more meaningful lives never failed to be honest, open, and full of zest. Errors were made— they were expected; but frequently even the errors contributed to the eventual development of creative solutions.

The Continuum Center continues to offer a growing, changing program to the greater metropolitan area of Detroit. Flexibility has made possible a prompt adaptation to the needs of various groups of people living in this area and to the economic pressures impinging upon the Center. The advantages of flexibility have been, however, balanced by certain continuing characteristics. For example, each time the basic program, "Investigation into Identity," was offered during the first seven years of the Center's history, (1) orientation sessions were used; (2) volunteer assistants, in varying numbers, expanded the services of the staff; (3) standardized tests with varying emphases, were used; (4) factual information about opportunities which were open in education, volunteer service, and employment were made available in varying ways to clients. Minor

changes affected such characteristics as (1) the location of the courses (many were held upon request at various centers in the Detroit suburbs); (2) the number of sessions in each course; (3) the manner of administering tests; (4) the management of adviser interviews; (5) the use of the telephone call-back.

A major shift in emphasis took place in the basic program in 1969. Investigation into Identity, 1965-68, emphasized the sociological setting of a woman's life and included informative lectures with some group discussion and some development of group relationships. Continuum Center resources for the course included a psychologist and three other specialists to advise in the areas of testing and clinical psychology, education, volunteer service, and employment; an orientation counselor; and a director. Selected Center alumni, who received a certain amount of training, augmented the professional staff by serving as volunteer discussion leaders.

Investigation into Identity, after 1969, emphasized exercises in group process. The Continuum Center resources for the course were changed to the extent that two counselors replaced the four specialists, and the volunteer discussion leaders, who became known as group leaders, secured further training to enable them to serve as paraprofessional therapeutic peers.

INVESTIGATION INTO IDENTITY BEFORE 1969

The basic program of the early Continuum Center grew out of three annual Conferences on Women held between 1963 and 1965. There mature housewife-mothers had expressed their need for knowing themselves. They had shown their lack of confidence in their abilities; and they had revealed self images that were quite different, in many cases, from the way other people actually saw them. The planners of the conferences saw a need for a self-study program to help women see themselves realistically.

The first name for the self-study program was "The Continuum Center Testing Program." The staff and many of the other planners of the Center had great confidence in the use of batteries of nationally standardized tests as a technique for discovering the specific, individual information each client needed to plan her first steps toward realizing her individual potential.

Early clients, however, had been away from the tests of their school days for many years, and many had dreaded tests when they were in school. It is hardly surprising that some of them disliked the testing part of the Center's program. Staff members made many different efforts to help the clients through this problem. The idea of a battery of tests was not given up, but the name of the course was changed to "Investigation into Identity." The testing sessions were

interspersed with other kinds of sessions, and the tests were explained and previewed at the Orientation Session by the psychologist who would administer them later in the course. From time to time, the battery of tests was revised to improve the usefulness of the findings to the clients.

After the first two years, many minor changes had resulted in a rather stable program of about 14 sessions which culminated in a series of interviews with the specialists on the Center's staff.

EXAMPLE OF ONE OF THE BASIC PROGRAMS OFFERED

Sessions 1 through 8 emphasize the search for identity. Sessions 9 through 14 emphasize the search for direction. Approximately three hours are allowed for each session.

Session 1: The Sociological Situation (Orientation)

Rationale — A client can be helped by the knowledge that others feel as she does, that a changed world has shrunk women's traditional role, and that she will have understanding and support from the women she finds in her group of five or six clients.

Content — Women are guests at this first meeting. They are seated at tables for six, meet their discussion leader, and are welcomed by an Orientation Counselor.

The Director of the Center describes what the changed world has done to the traditional role of women, and tells how the Center was designed in response to their problem.

To allay fears about the testing program, the psychologist who will administer the tests describes them briefly.

The latter part of the session (approximately one hour) is reserved for small group discussion led by each group's discussion leader.

The time, place and fee are described and registration is held for those who decide to enroll in the course.

Sessions 2, 4, 6, and 8: Testing

Rationale — A client can be helped by testing herself to learn about her ability, knowledge, interests, preferences, values, and aptitudes. She can be helped to understand the meaning and value of the tests by an interview (later) with a clinical psychologist.

Content — Clients take a battery of standardized tests in four alternate sessions. They score some of their own tests (such as interest and value tests) and discuss the tests with the members of their group (the discussion being led by the trained volunteer discussion leader who has been assigned to that group).

Session 3: The Eight Stages

Rationale — A client can be helped by realizing that the rather dramatic changes in her responsibilities are changes that most

women experience. A discussion among those who are experiencing a certain stage can be revealing and reassuring to each of the members of the discussion group.

Content — A presentation (by a taped chronology made during the 1965 Conference on Women) of the eight stages of the adult woman's continuum of life is followed by a discussion among clients grouped according to their own stage. This discussion is led by a discussion leader who is also experiencing "the stage" of her group.

Optional Session: Husband's Night

Rationale — Because a client's husband is likely to be a major influence on any development in her understanding of herself and her subsequent action, husbands should understand the purpose of the course, Investigation into Identity. Their interest and support should be encouraged.

Content — A special presentation of the situation of women, as it is interpreted by the Continuum Center, is followed by a description of the Center's basic program. A general discussion "for men only" concludes the session. The subject matter of this discussion, which is usually led by the staff psychologist, is the Center's basic program and its implications, not only for women, but also for husbands.

Explanation — An additional involvement of husbands is scheduled at the beginning of each Investigation into Identity course. The folder given to each client contains a "Husband's or Friend's Essay Outline" and the instructions ask that a brief essay be written about the client. ("Friend" was added to this request after the Center staff realized some clients did not have husbands.)

Session 5: Opportunities in Education, Volunteer Work, and Employment

Rationale — A client needs an introduction to some possibilities for herself in the world outside the home. The most practical introduction is a brief presentation of information by the staff specialists in education, volunteer work, and employment. Individual interviews with these same specialists, when they are held later, can be expected to be more productive for the client as a result of this introduction.

Content — Each of the Center's three specialists (who will be helping clients, later, to learn the possibilities for themselves in education, volunteer service, and employment) present a general, brief overview of their field. A dramatization of an interview indicates the kind of cooperative search for direction which specialist and client will conduct. Questions are answered.

Session 7: The Circle of Influences

Rationale — A client needs help to understand that, for every choice open to her, there will be a bewildering variety of influences affecting her decision.
Content — Many factors which influence a woman when she considers any major change in her life are presented and demonstrated. There are, for example, the values of her ethnic background and her husband's, her family traditions and his, the expectations of the community in which they live, her education and his, her self-image and his image of her, her idealization of her role, her stage in life, her health, his salary, and the balance of family resources with family responsibilities.

Session 9: A Consideration of Decision-Making

Rationale — A client can be expected to grapple with the difficulties of decision-making more successfully if she analyzes and practices the process of decision-making.
Content — The staff counselor, a woman who has enjoyed the housewife-mother role and is now enjoying full-time employment, leads this final group meeting.

The session is divided into two parts. In the first part, three case studies are presented and are discussed by the clients in their small groups. Each group is led by the discussion leader who worked with it in Session 1.

In the second part, clients fill out five similar forms, one for each of the following alternatives:

Stay at home and be happy about it.
Immobilization without deciding on direction.
Education.
Volunteer service.
Employment.

Each client then follows the forms as she draws together the information which will guide her eventual decision. (The acronym, SIEVE, is used frequently at the Continuum Center to denote the five alternatives available to the clients.)

Session 10: An Interview with the Psychologist

The first of several (two to five) individual interviews with professional members of the staff, this interview occupies approximately one hour and involves explanations of test scores and their bearing upon the client's expressed goals.

Sessions 11, 12, and 13: Interview with the Specialist Advisers on the Center Staff

Each client may choose to interview none, any, or all three of the specialist advisers according to her interest in and knowledge of

their respective fields of Education, Vocational Service, and Employment. (The acronym, EVE, is used frequently at the Center to denote the three fields.)

These interviews with the specialist advisers may be made upon completion of the nine group sessions or during the several months immediately following the sessions.

Session 14: Progress Report with the Counselor

What was originally a telephone call-back, made to each client six months after her completion of the Investigation into Identity course, has evolved into each client's returning to the Center about six months after her course and having a personal interview with the Counselor.

Mutual advantages are obtained when the client returns to the Center. The lapse of time allows the client to reconsider her situation, to reevaluate her progress toward her expressed goal, and to discuss her next step with the counselor from the viewpoint of her more deliberately evaluated position. The return visit also assures her of the Center's continuing interest in her.

The Center benefits from a client's return at the end of six months by receiving a more objective feedback than is usually represented by comments made during participation in the earlier 13 sessions of the course.

THE CLIENT'S FOLDER

At the opening of each Investigation into Identity course, clients were given folders which contained approximately 20 pages of instructional material, forms, bibliography, and essay outlines. As the "investigation" proceeded, information accumulated in each client's folder. Eventually the folder contained the client's entrance history, a summary sheet of test scores and other test findings, a "roles" form, information on opportunities in education, volunteer service, and employment, and a "Circle of Influences" profile — plus Continuum Center newsletters, a catalog, case studies, and reprints of articles on the roles of women.

INVESTIGATION INTO IDENTITY AFTER 1969

The second major form of the basic program had taken shape by the fall of 1969. Believing that people can become self-actualizers, the staff members of the Continuum Center developed a design which would more effectively promote self-growth through interaction. In the words of the first Director, Priscilla Jackson, "The Center, through its revised program, encourages women to accept themselves and their abilities or lack of abilities, to drop the facade

of perfection and happiness that costs so much energy to maintain. It encourages them to be themselves — to discover that the self is rather wonderful with all its strengths and limitations."

RATIONALE

As the Center staff members listened to clients of the early program, they saw a need for more self-exploration with more time devoted to inter-personal relations. Among the many factors considered in making the change to a stronger emphasis on group process were some special needs of mature women which had been revealed during the first four years. For example, (1) Clients, almost without exception, wanted to learn more about themselves, their own abilities, interests, preferences, and values; therefore, they needed help in extensive self examination. (2) Clients tended to be conditioned by years of living in a society where Father made decisions, then Husband made decisions; therefore, one of their problems was their tendency to turn to authority figures to tell them how to solve the problems of their mature lives. They needed help in learning techniques that would facilitate decision-making. (3) Clients, usually without recognizing their fears, sought reassurance that they would still be safe and loved if they tried to do what they were capable of doing; therefore, they needed help in looking at the world around them realistically, in seeing themselves realistically, and in placing higher values on themselves.

EXAMPLES OF THE BASIC PROGRAM OFFERED IN 1972

The basic program, "Investigation into Identity," was revised. Clients were encouraged to understand and accept themselves as a prelude to any serious consideration of changes in their life style. The primary helpers in this more comprehensive self examination were carefully trained volunteer paraprofessionals. They were called "group leaders;" they were the counterparts of the "discussion leaders" of the early program, but they were given more responsibility than the discussion leaders had been expected to carry.

The basic program continued to be a growing, changing program. In order to present this quality, two variations are shown in summary-outline form.

Summary outline of the spring, 1972, Investigation into Identity course

This version retained the orientation session to which interested people were invited as guests. There the group leaders and a staff member took time to speak of their own experiences, to discuss the tests which would be given later, and to familiarize the guests with the goals and structure of the program. A careful explanation was

made of the fact that the focus throughout the course would be on small group interaction.

The orientation session introduced the ten working sessions which were organized in the following order:

First Session: Encourage participants to accept selves and their own feelings and become involved in group interaction.

Second Session: Learn to work in groups, build self-esteem, self-trust, and group trust.

Third Session: Increase understanding of self, values, need for control; help others to do the same.

Fourth Session: Learn more about one's own personality dimensions; test this in the group with constructive feedback.

Fifth Session: Understand the depressive syndrome and lack of confidence and self-worth; understand immobilization in the normal woman.

Sixth Session: Explore educational and employment possibilities through testing.

Seventh Session: Explore potential possibilities of the individual through small group discussion.

Eighth Session: Analyze desirable changes in life style, goals, and possible decisions — with group support.

Ninth Session: Communications workshop for participants and husbands.

Tenth Session: Interview with the Counselor — if necessary and desired; pooling accumulated information, clarifying thinking, seeking the next step.

Summary outline of the fall, 1972, Investigation into Identity course

This version of the post-1969 basic program was developed to allow clients a wider choice. A woman could enroll for a preliminary course of self-study, and then she could add, whenever she chose, the more intensive work in the development of communication skills or in the development of decision-making skills — or she could add both of the more intensive Stage II courses. (Note that this series was given a new general title.)

LIFE PLANNING FOR WOMEN

Life planning is the process of discovering who you are, what you want to do, where you want to go, and how you want to get there. This is a two-stage program to help women become more effective in setting goals and working toward them. Much of the work is be done in small groups led by carefully selected and trained volunteers under staff supervision.

Stage I: Investigation Into Identity (6 sessions)

Basic to any future planning is an understanding of ourselves and how we relate to others. This program is designed to assist participants in achieving this understanding through structured small-group work, readings, and personality tests. Stage I programs are held in various locations throughout the year. (The first session is a free orientation.)

Stage II: Continued Investigation

Either or both of the following courses are available to past participants of Investigation into Identity programs, 1969-1972.

Personal Growth — (5 sessions) This course provides an opportunity for more intensive self-exploration. Small group work and further personality testing are used to help participants take a deeper look at themselves and the ways in which they relate to the significant people in their lives. The emphasis is upon the development and utilization of improved communication skills.

Career Development — (5 sessions) A decision-making framework is used to guide participants to become more self-directed in planning their careers, paid or unpaid. Toward that end, structured small-group experiences, tests, and simulations are used to help examine skills, preferences, values, and personal resources, as well as outside resources such as educational and employment opportunities.

AN EVOLVING PROGRAM

An evaluation form used in 1971-72 was called a "Feedback Sheet." The first words on it were:

> *As you know, the Investigation into Identity program is constantly being revised. In trying to make changes which will improve it, we rely very heavily on the feedback we get from women who have taken the program. So please think about this carefully and give us your honest opinion.*

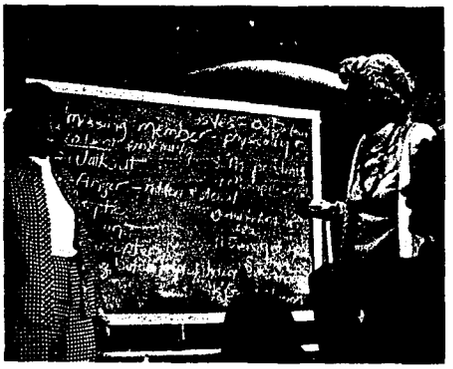
The opinions were, for the most part, enthusiastic about the help that had been received. Clients liked the work of the group leaders. One client even expressed a wish that a program of self-study might be started for everyone at the junior high school level.

Help is, indeed, a search. Experimentation continues at the Continuum Center. The basic program continues to change in the process of trying to find ways of making its help more effective. One kind of practical evidence would seem to indicate that the search has been helpful: at the end of 1972, the basic program, Investigation into Identity, counted approximately 3000 alumni.

Husbands of participants attend a "Partner's Night" session provided during investigation into identity program.

Puzzle exercise provides group inter-action during investigation into identity program.

Dr. ***Sylvia Fink*** *&* ***Eleanor Driver*** *conduct a session of the investigation into identity program.*



CHAPTER II
THE GENERAL PROGRAM

The term "general program" is used in this review to indicate those parts of the Continuum Center's activities which are outside the "basic program." In other words, a course or a service or a staff activity which is not strictly a part of Investigation into Identity is considered a part of the general program.

And since that definition places under the heading of this chapter a large proportion of the work of staff members through seven full years, some kind of limiting device must be employed. For that reason two examples have been selected. The first example is a general program offered by the Continuum Center when it was emphasizing the sociological setting of a woman's life and specific information about the world outside the home. The second example is a general program offered by the Center after it had changed its emphasis to personal development with exercises in group process.

AN EXAMPLE OF THE CONTINUUM CENTER GENERAL PROGRAM — I

The Divisions

1. Psychological Testing and Counseling
2. Educational Advising
3. Volunteer Service Advising
4. Employment Advising
5. Orientation Interviewing

The Continuum Child Care Center Courses

1. Parent Observation of the Pre-School Child
2. Refresher Mathematics for College Entrants
3. China Updated
4. The Role of the School Assistant in Reading Instruction
5. Ghetto Life
6. Women Alone
7. Communicating Across the Generation Gap
8. Continuing Conversations
9. Workshop on Volunteer Service
10. Workshop on Vocational Opportunities, Paid and Volunteer
11. Workshop on Education

Women's Conferences

1. College Returnees' Meeting
2. Changing Concepts in Nursing Care Plans
3. Conference for Parents of Pre-School Children
4. Demonstration Conference: Program for Mature Women

Leadership Training for Volunteer Discussion Leaders

New Opportunities for Women

1. A market for arts and crafts
2. A licensed practical nurse's program
3. The General Motors' Computer Program
4. Volunteer service as discussion leaders in the Center's Investigation into Identity course
5. Other volunteer service used in the Center
6. Volunteer service as "Friends to Core City Seniors."

Other Staff Activities

1. Promotion
2. In-service training
3. Independent educational and professional pursuits
4. Intern program

AN EXAMPLE OF THE CONTINUUM CENTER GENERAL PROGRAM — II

Counseling

1. Ongoing group counseling
2. Individual interviews

Child Care — available in the Oakland University Child Care Center

Courses

1. Communication Training for Couples
2. Women Alone
3. Gestalt Awareness Training
4. Human Sexuality
5. Career Planning
6. Parent Effectiveness Training
7. Using the Creative Process (A workshop)
8. Human Relations Training for Men (A workshop)
9. Conflict Resolution
10. Workshop in Parent Education
11. Workshops in Art and Handcrafts
12. Workshop in Drama

Co-Sponsored Conferences

1. Parent-effectiveness training
2. Personal growth
3. The Role of the Executive's Wife

Leadership Training

1. For the Center's volunteer corps of group leaders
2. For the Center's Program Coordinator
3. For professional, paraprofessional, or volunteer workers in other organizations
4. For members of special interest groups who wish to serve as peer counselors in their groups

The general program developed out of a need to supply further information and counseling to clients of the Investigation into Identity program — clients who were seen as "Women on the Move." The work of the Center, during its early years, was viewed as a sequence: First, help the client understand herself in her environment; then help her to investigate possible directions in which she might move and to choose a direction for her first steps. The basic Investigation into Identity program, in which the first part of this sequence would be accomplished, would be followed by a more generalized program of support for individual decision-making.

CHOICES OF DIRECTION FOR WOMEN ON THE MOVE

The choices were described as the following:

1. Stay at home — and like it
2. Immobilized in indecision
3. Education
4. Volunteer Service
5. Employment

"The Continuum Center is not," in the words of its first Director, "dedicated to getting women out of the home." Priscilla Jackson continued by saying, "It is as restricting to say to a woman 'You must work' as it is to say 'You may not work.' We remind women that staying home may still be a good choice for certain personalities in certain situations: the mother of pre-schoolers; the woman with an active role in her husband's business or social life; the musician, writer, artist, or craftsman, and many others. Homemaking continues to be a meaningful life style for many women."

The second alternative was a negative choice. Women who had declared they wanted to move, who had completed Investigation into Identity, who seemed to be free of other responsibilities, would simply not take a first step. They seemed to be immobilized by indecision.

PROGRAM EMPHASIS ON THREE AREAS

The final three alternatives in the group of five choices represented the three directions in which clients of the Center who wished to make a change were most likely to find their new life style. These alternatives. Education, Volunteer Service, and Employment, became, therefore, the areas in which the Center provided a wide range of specific information and individual advisement. Professional advisers, each of whom was a specialist in one of these fields, staffed the divisions.

THE DIVISIONS

The five "Divisions" of the Continuum Center's general program comprised a group of counseling and advising services which were built around a group of five professional staff members. These were (1) psychologist, (2) a counselor, assisted by a second counselor during part of this time, (3) an educational adviser, (4) a volunteer service adviser, and (5) an employment adviser.

Psychological testing and counseling — Information in regard to a client's academic abilities, vocational and educational interests, and her personality was gained through a group of standardized tests administered during the client's participation in the basic program. This information was intended to form part of the broad base of self-knowledge upon which a client would draw when she began to make her decision on the direction of her move.

Counseling was also, in part, an information-gathering technique as it was used by the psychologist during a client's interview. Here the partial picture provided by test results was rounded out by the individual's history, current goals, activities, and frustrations. Counseling, however, provided the added factor of feedback. The opportunity to explore various alternatives for action with another person (who was, of course, professionally equipped to assist such an exploration) was an important factor in helping a client decide upon the direction she would take.

By the end of 1968, the psychologist and others of the Continuum Center staff were questioning a tendency on the part of some of the clients to depend upon a counselor for the decision. In other words, a woman would want the psychologist to tell her what she should do. Every effort was made to develop self-reliance in such cases, and to teach basic techniques of decision-making.

Educational advising — The Education Adviser described his responsibilities at the Center as being (1) to inform, (2) to inspire, and (3) to catalyze. The clearinghouse of information which he maintained included the offerings, requirements, and general philosophies of the many educational institutions within commut-

ing distance of the clients. For example, he knew where to go for vocational training and for cultural enrichment, for credit and non-credit courses, and for an unusual combination of resources that would fit the individual needs of a certain client. He also had information on correspondence courses, television and taped courses, independent study programs, and the opportunities developing nationally in equivalency exams, advanced placement and special degree programs for adults.

Each client brought her own combination of problems to an interview. Some women lacked confidence; they needed to be helped to believe in their own possibilities, to believe in their own plan, or to organize many factors in their own situation in order to make a plan. Other women brought excellent plans to the interview, asked for the information they needed, and benefited from a simple confirmation of their plans.

Volunteer Service advising — The Volunteer Service Adviser came to the Center with experience in social work. She saw the Center's clients as needing to make a personal decision to choose the right volunteer service. Too often a client would admit that she had permitted her children and friends to persuade her to work in their school, church, and youth organizations and to do their fund raising. As a result, few women had thought of volunteer service as serving their own long-term needs. But the individual can choose a volunteer service which, while serving her community, will also permit her to keep abreast of the latest developments in her former field — of new research findings and the most recent thinking — or to explore a different vocation before starting to work or going back to school.

Women interested in doing a challenging job must be prepared to take some training. Usually this will consist of a basic orientation to a program's purpose, facilities, and personnel, but it may involve a much more extensive preparation.

While recognizing the tremendous needs of various community services, the Adviser avoided the temptation to place a woman in the spot with the most vocal need; she carefully considered the woman's need first. Such a procedure served the community best, also, since volunteers who were vitally interested in their work did a better job and were more enthusiastic supporters of their community program.

Employment advising — "Seeking employment without careful planning is like going out on a blind date — it may be most successful, a commitment for life — or more likely it can be a disaster, a burn from which recovery is slow and may never take place." Thus the Adviser for employment counseled Center clients.

The major functions of employment advising were (1) to work with the client and (2) to work for the client. The Adviser helped the client identify the specific, marketable skills that she had. Then she helped in documenting the client's history so that those skills

could be validated. After that the Adviser provided realistic information about the world the client wanted to enter — whether it was business, commerce, academia, or government. Although the Center was not a placement bureau, the Adviser also worked for the client by developing job opportunities.

The Continuum Center took the position that, while women lacked information about job opportunities, the working world lacked information about women. Frequently the need was for an intermediary. Early in the Center's history a climate of cooperation was established with private employment agencies, the Michigan Employment Security Commission, and the Student Placement Office at Oakland University. Later 10 private employment agencies cooperated to the extent of submitting biweekly or monthly listings of part-time and full-time positions that would be available to mature women seeking to reenter the labor market. As the work of the Center's Employment Adviser became known, and because the Detroit metropolitan area was experiencing a labor shortage for trained and educated people, employers began calling the Center directly. Women were referred in such cases on condition that the available position fulfilled the needs and expectations of women.

The Adviser often talked to a housewife who was employed 10 or 15 years ago and who had difficulty realizing that she could not pick up where she left off. She was usually referred to the Volunteer Services Adviser or the Educational Adviser for information and guidance toward developing skills which would be marketable.

Orientation interviewing — The Center's first contact with prospective clients was usually by telephone. A secretary answered and provided a friendly, accurate answer to questions about when, where, what, and how much. If, however, the secretary sensed that an invitation to attend the Orientation Session was not enough, she invited the caller to make an appointment with the Orientation Adviser.

During interviews with prospective clients, the Adviser tried to help each woman determine whether the Investigation into Identity program would serve her. Together they examined her stage in life, her educational and work achievements, her doubts, expectations, and almost always, her lack of confidence. The Adviser left the decision concerning enrollment squarely with the prospective client.

The Orientation Adviser also met the prospective clients who walked into the Center to ask about its program, and she conducted the personal interviews with alumni of the Investigation into Identity course when they returned to the Center (after six months) to discuss their progress. She served as a representative of each client, listening for evaluation of the work of the Center and helping to readjust the design of the Center's program to keep it freshly responsive to those it served.

THE CONTINUUM CHILD CARE CENTER

In 1968 the Continuum Center maintained a child-care facility so that the mothers of young children could continue their education during hours when husbands and high-school-age baby-sitters were unavailable. The Child Care Center was open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A nursery school program was provided for children 2½ through 5 years of age.

COURSES

The courses in the general program of the Continuum Center were usually developed to meet a specific demand from the people in the surrounding area, and they were repeated if the demand appeared to justify their repetition. Such a sensitive and relevant curriculum changed frequently.

Parent Observation of the Pre-School Child — 10 sessions for mothers and their children of 3 or 4 years; an evening conference for both parents. Limited to 13 mothers. (Baby sitting service available.)

Mothers observed the group of children at supervised play during the first hour. They made written records of their own children. During the second hour the mothers met with the instructor to discuss their observations and basic principles of growth and development of the 3 and 4 year old child.

Refresher Mathematics for College Entrants — 10 sessions. A review of fundamentals and an introduction to basic mathematical skills and procedures, this course was offered to meet a need expressed frequently by clients of the Center who were returning to school, but who feared that they would have special difficulty with mathematics — and whose scores on standardized tests supported such fears.

China Updated — 2 sessions offered in cooperation with the Village Women's Club and forming a sequel to the course (also offered jointly), "History in the Making."

The Role of the School Assistant in Reading Instruction — 12 sessions. A non-credit course for school assistants and parents who had one or more years of college training and who needed help in gaining skills in assisting readers Women who were volunteering (or wished to volunteer) as assistants to readers had requested such help.

Ghetto Life — 9 sessions. This course, planned and conducted by the Volunteer Service Adviser of the Continuum Center, became one of the successes of the general program. In the spring of 1967, the Center received a grant under Title I of the Higher Education Act to develop a Problems of Poverty course. It was . . . designed to help newly-recruited staff members (both paid and volunteer) of organizations which operated in poverty areas. It presented differences, subtle as well as extreme, between mid-

dle-class life and conditions of poverty. The historical aspects of poverty were touched on, with the prime emphasis on current ghetto life. Lecturers were primarily from social agencies. There was opportunity to meet and talk with people who lived in poverty. The course met primarily at Oakland University with several field trips to ghetto areas in Pontiac and Detroit.

Participants in this course represented a wide geographic, age, education, and experience distribution. The staff responsible for the course learned that inexperienced workers in poverty areas needed quite a different course from that required to help experienced professionals.

Women Alone — 10 sessions. This course was recommended to widows or divorcees as a preliminary to entering Investigation into Identity. By learning in this course how to handle the trauma of loss, they would be ready to consider a changing life which was the chief purpose of Investigation into Identity.

The course investigated such areas of concern as money management, children, social life problems, remarriage, self-improvement, legal rights, and opportunities outside the home. Professional consultants were asked to assist as they were needed.

Communicating across the Generation Gap — 10 sessions. The central method used by the philosopher who taught this course was a dialogue which required participants to examine and clarify their own values and beliefs. The materials included the books, magazines, underground newspapers, tapes, and records which were experienced by young people. The course tried to lower some of the barriers to communication by (1) helping participants become acquainted with important influences affecting high school and college students and other young people of similar ages; (2) understanding these influences; (3) exploring ways of using this knowledge to make actual contact with individual young people.

Continuing Conversations — 7 sessions. The Continuum Center made a serious attempt, through this course, to reach the group of women immobilized in indecision. Those who had completed the Investigation into Identity program, but still seemed to be unable to decide upon a direction in which to move, were invited to enroll in "Continuing Conversations." They were offered an opportunity to explore further the choices open to them and to take an honest look at anxiety, fear, guilt, freedom, and responsibility. Emphasis was placed on the resources each participant possessed for dealing with her problems and making her own decisions.

Workshop on Volunteer Service — 10 sessions. The first session dealt with an overall view of the human, economic, political, and structural factors which affect living in a metropolitan area. In later sessions, agency representatives presented information about their programs and the volunteer opportunities that existed

in them. Among the programs were examples of those for the mentally and emotionally ill, the physically handicapped, the mentally retarded, the culturally handicapped, and the aged as well as those for leisure-time activities.

Workshop on Vocational Opportunities, Paid and Volunteer — 8 sessions. The Investigation into Identity program was a prerequisite. A client was helped to understand her assets: those she possessed, those required by an employer, and those that could be presented on application forms and in personal interviews. She identified sources of employment (volunteer and paid) and explored her commitment to the changes in status, values, concepts, and people relationships that such work would involve. She reassessed her objectives in light of the facts and developed a tentative timetable for action.

Workshop on Education — 6 sessions, 2 of them optional. Each woman considered seriously the question of what value further education would have in her life. She tested her academic abilities and interests, studied the catalogs and entrance requirements of several institutions, and planned a tentative course of study. A general adventure into the world of employment possibilities was offered as a two-part optional investigation.

WOMEN'S CONFERENCES

College Returnees' Meeting — 1 session. Mature women who had decided to go to a junior college or to a four-year college or university learned of the problems and rewards of reentry into the academic world.

Changing Concepts in Nursing Care Plans — 2 sessions. This conference developed out of the concerns of members of the nursing profession who knew the need to update both current and inactive members.

Conference for Parents of Pre-School Children — 1 session. Co-sponsored by the Greater Detroit Cooperative Nursery Council, the Michigan Council of Cooperative Nurseries, the Pre-School Association of Metropolitan Detroit, and the Michigan State Cooperative Extension Service, this meeting was intended to further general understanding on the part of both parents and teachers.

Demonstration Conference: Program for Mature Women — 4 days. This meeting was planned with the help of suggestions made by participants in the earlier Kellogg National Invitational Conference at Oakland University in 1967. Both conferences were evidence of an intention on the part of the Continuum Center and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation (which had made, in 1968, a second grant to the Center) to disseminate the findings of the Center's experiment.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEER DISCUSSION LEADERS

A facet of the general program which attracted widespread interest is the Center's continuing and expanding program for training group leaders. (Chapter III explains this work in greater detail.) In 1968, the foundation for that work was well established. Volunteer discussion leaders worked in the basic program, Investigation into Identity, from the time of the first year — as soon as there were alumni of Investigation into Identity. At first they were thought of only as peers to reassure new clients, but soon they were being trained as discussion leaders for assisting with small groups.

Each volunteer attended four sessions of specialized training. First, the history of the Center's volunteer group was reviewed. Then elementary principles of discussion leadership were presented by a Center psychologist, and the group discussed theory and techniques. Each trainee participated in a practice session in leading, and she observed the work of an experienced discussion leader in a small group during an orientation session of the Investigation into Identity program. The same four-session course of training was offered whenever needed.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

The emphasis on providing the clients of the Center with factual information about the world outside their homes included actual assistance by the educational, volunteer service, and employment advisers toward achieving a first step into that outside world. In spite of repeated insistance that the Center was not a placement agency, the helpful efforts of staff members resulted in the paid or unpaid employment of many clients. One interesting aspect of this practical assistance was the development of new opportunities in both paid and volunteer work.

A market for arts and crafts developed by the Arts and Crafts Group — A number of clients of the Continuum Center needed an opportunity to exchange creative ideas and products and to learn how to market a product or a talent. A few even considered the possibility of production of one salable item as a small business. The facts of the commercial world of art were given to the Arts and Crafts Group by a successful artist. Later a showing of products of the group's members was held in the halls of the Continuing Education Division; five oil paintings and one sculpture were sold. The group presented some of its work in an exhibition building at a nearby shopping center. Other exhibitions were planned.

A licensed practical nurse's program — This training program opened the field of practical nursing to many mature women who

could devote only certain portions of their days or weeks to preparation for future employment. The project served in the following ways: (1) it provided a new source of manpower for the health-care field; (2) it brought mothers, who were already skillful in nurturing roles, into an area of health care where their abilities in a one-to-one relationship could be uniquely beneficial; (3) it enabled mothers with small children to develop a skill which they could apply in a paid job after their family responsibilities became less demanding.

The General Motors' Computer Program.— The needs of the housewife-mother and of a large corporation were brought together with benefit to both when the Continuum Center helped a director of a data systems company meet the computer-programming needs of the Chevrolet Division of General Motors Corporation. A part-time training program was established in a suburban location. A group of Center clients and former clients learned computer programming and several stayed with the company as paid workers.

Other volunteer service used in the Center — New opportunities for volunteer service became more and more plentiful at the Continuum Center. Volunteers were recruited and trained to abstract numerical facts from client files. (A smaller group of "rusty" key-punchers updated their skills by putting the material on data-processing decks.) The volunteer abstractors gained a rewarding day out of the house each week, and the Center gained a more convenient filing and mailing system as well as a valuable demographic picture of the clientele of the Center. Research was facilitated for the graduate students and professional specialists who were becoming increasingly interested in the Center's accumulating data on the mature, middle-class housewife-mother.

New opportunities were accepted by women who became the part-time receptionists, registrars, and speakers of the Center, and by others who gave their training and experience in market research, in history, and in public relations. Many hours were donated to the Center by more than 200 trained volunteers during the year 1968-69. While this represented a huge annual gift to the work of the Center, it also meant a new opportunity for meaningful participation in the world outside her home for each of the volunteers.

Two cautions are, however, appropriate. The staff should guard against the temptation to "make a place" for a client even though a job does not actually exist. And staff must remember that women need to be started in a direction that leads outward. Volunteer work within the protected atmosphere of the Center should, in most cases, only be a first step in the outward direction.

Volunteer service as "Friends to Core City Seniors" — Continuum Center alumni were invited to serve in a program started

by a Detroit high school teacher who had decided, some few years before, to do something about the gap she saw between what inner-city seniors could do and what they did do upon graduation. The Center assisted the volunteers by enrolling them in the course, Ghetto Life, and by providing learning-evaluating meetings for them as they discovered their additional needs on the job.

OTHER STAFF ACTIVITIES

In addition to the work done during the certain number of hours for which they are paid, most professional workers do a great deal more — both for the organization which employs them and to upgrade their own qualifications in the profession. The professional staff of the Continuum Center was no exception to this observation. A few examples illustrate a broad field of "extra-curricular" activity.

Promotion — The Director of the Center made many speeches describing the work of the Center. She helped a large metropolitan community become acquainted with the new Center; she also opened the way for new clients, donations, and scholarships. General publicity assisted in the growth of the program as newspapers carried feature articles on the Center. The Detroit, Birmingham, and Pontiac newspapers reached the largest number of women who, later, said they had enrolled at the Center because of newspaper articles promoting the Center.

Ten thousand colorful brochures were used during the first year alone. They were mailed to the surrounding suburbs and to a selected national audience, and they were distributed at meetings wherever staff members appeared.

The Division of Continuing Education of Oakland University helped with promotion. Mention was made of the Continuum Center at many conferences sponsored by other units of the Division; and those units frequently invited staff members to be resource people at the conferences. The Center's testing course was included in the semiannual course catalog published by the Division and mailed to 25,000 homes.

In-service training — Informal discussion within the Center, feedback from clients, and the continuing work with volunteers-in-training formed a kind of continual in-service education for members of the staff. Training of a more formal type was also recommended.

Independent educational and professional pursuits — Staff members attended professional conferences, served on professional task forces and committees, and earned advanced degrees from nearby graduate schools during the years.

Intern program — The first intern came to the Center from Wayne State University. She used client data as the basis for her master's degree thesis which was entitled, "The Relationship of

Intelligence to the Return to College by the Mature Woman."

Other interns were graduate and undergraduate students from several universities. The data they used were impersonal; the confidential nature of the original client folders was carefully protected.

CHANGES IN THE GENERAL PROGRAM

The program of the Center was changed in certain particulars every year, but during 1969 a major change was made which affected both the basic program, Investigation into Identity, and the general program of other courses and activities. By that time the staff members had heard more than 1,000 women express remarkably similar hopes and fears. The staff had studied the pattern of mild to serious depression, low self-esteem, and low self-confidence which characterized the clients. The staff had also studied the findings of nation-wide research into behavioral change. Slowly and experimentally, they added more small-group work to the Center's program. They strengthened the role of the group leader. They carefully created an atmosphere in which behavioral change could take place. As the Director of the Center said in 1972, "We tried to hold up a mirror for her [the client] to see herself in a protected atmosphere where she might try on new and different behavior [and find out] if it seemed appropriate."

PROGRAM EMPHASIS ON PERSONAL GROWTH

Believing as they did in the power of continuing education, members of the Continuum Center staff supplemented the work of the basic program with courses, conferences, and counseling which could help women — and men — recognize normal developmental tasks and make the necessary transitions in their lives. Since everyone had to expect to meet certain times of crises, he needed to learn that he had a choice of ways to behave in times of stress — that he could decide how to behave. He needed to learn how to exercise his options. Emphasis was placed increasingly, after 1969, on personal growth as a way to release people to their own problem-solving abilities.

PROGRAM EXPANSION THROUGH LARGER ROLES FOR GROUP LEADERS

Although the professional staff was smaller in 1971-72 than in 1968, a vigorous basic program and a varied general program were conducted successfully. The Center staff gave much credit for this achievement to the corps of volunteer group leaders and the "Adjunct Staff" of program coordinators. Specially trained alumni of the Investigation into Identity course not only assisted

with that basic program, but the program coordinators planned and led (with the assistance of group leaders and the supervision of professional staff members) many of the general courses and training programs offered to the public.

COUNSELING

A staff counselor offered both group counseling and individual interviews.

Ongoing group counseling — Group counseling, co-led by the staff psychologist, took the form of ongoing group support for a protracted time for the graduates of the basic program, Investigation into Identity, who needed continuing help in coping with human relations problems — particularly those problems which occur within a family setting.

Individual interviews — Most of the individual counseling involved interviews with graduates of the Investigation into Identity course. They came to the staff counselor to talk about possible next steps and how to begin making some changes in their life style. Some of these interviews were specifically directed toward educational or vocational planning, but most of them involved a general thinking through of the counselee's goals in the light of her current situation.

COURSES

The following courses were offered to the public during the spring and fall of 1972. They were intended for both men and women and were designed to enhance the life planning process. They offered a diversity of environments in which people could take further steps toward personal growth, more effective decision-making, and improved interpersonal communication.

Communication Training for Couples — 7 sessions. Couples were offered an opportunity to learn new ways to communicate more clearly and thus to resolve their differences constructively. The first session was offered as a free orientation.

Women Alone; also offered as *Persons Alone* — 8 sessions. Women (or men and women) whose marriages had been dissolved, whether by divorce or death, were the potential students. The Center had learned through its early experience with women that many came for help during the trauma of learning to live alone. This course offered small group work which was augmented by resource people so that participants could begin to deal with such concerns as loneliness, guilt, sexuality, relationships with children and ex-spouses (if divorced), budgeting and household management.

Gestalt Awareness Training — 6 sessions. Existential forms of interaction and meditation were offered as a growth process. Participants were advised that they would move into deeper levels of awareness and that they would develop new abilities to cope

with and resolve their internal conflicts. The first session was offered as a free orientation.

Human Sexuality for Women and Human Sexuality — 8 sessions. The human sexual experience as it relates to sexual adjustment and satisfaction throughout life was studied. Material was based on the work of Masters and Johnson, Kinsey, Freud, Grams, Hegeler and Hegeler, and others.

Career Planning for Women and Career Planning for Men and Women — 5 sessions. Both titles were used in promotional material and indicated the transition that was occurring in several of the courses offered by the Continuum Center. Men were beginning to be included.

In the work on career planning, a decision-making framework was used to guide participants in becoming more self-directed in their planning, whether the careers were to be paid or unpaid. Toward the end of the course, structured small-group experiences, tests, and simulations were used to help participants examine skills, preferences, values, and personal resources, as well as to become acquainted with outside resources, and educational and employment opportunities.

Parent Effectiveness Training — 8 sessions. The January, 1972, "Newsletter" carried the following notice:

> Parent Effectiveness Training is a dramatically different way to learn the skills you need for the most important job of your life— bringing up children. P.E.T. teaches the "no-lose" method of resolving family conflicts using the same insights professionals have found so successful . . .

Using the Creative Process — A workshop in five sessions. This course was designed as a thinking-and-doing workshop for exploring a client's own imagination. Exercises were used to demonstrate the importance of awareness, fantasy, and playing with ideas in the practical application of the creative problem-solving process.

Human Relations Training for Men — A workshop involving 36 hours. An environment of group trust was created. Interpersonal skills were developed and improved through knowing and understanding the self. Personal growth and change were facilitated. As a result of the workshop, a client should have been able to have more rewarding relationships at home, with friends, and on the job.

Conflict Resolution — A workshop in six sessions. Men and women (with or without spouses) were helped to learn skills in resolving conflict — conflict between themselves and others, within themselves, or between two other people.

Workshop in Parent Education — 8 sessions; limited to 15 persons. A workable humanistic alternative was offered parents who wished to avoid both permissive and authoritarian child rearing. The skills taught could be applied immediately. Emphasis

was placed on (1) listening and communicating more effectively and (2) resolving conflicts creatively in situations which affected the needs and feelings of both parents and children. Certain sections of the workshops were especially geared to parents of children of certain ages as, for example, 10 years and above.

Workshops in Art and Handcrafts — Easy-to-attend one- and two-day workshops for those interested in weaving, stitchery, and rug-hooking were scheduled as part of a series of "Creative Classes." Three separate Christmas workshops included the making of easy, quick gifts, decorations and tree ornaments, and personal Christmas cards. The series included a special workshop for parents called "Understanding and Developing Your Child's Creativity."

Workshop in Drama — 8 sessions. The goal was to stretch the imagination. No dramatic experience was necessary. Creative exercises, role playing, character analysis, and the study of contemporary plays were devices used to improve clients' understanding of themselves and to increase their knowledge of the theater.

The Executive's Wife - - Wives of executives and managers in companies and corporations were invited to investigate their particular roles. They discovered how others felt about the role, analyzed the problems, and shared solutions.

New "Special Programs" For Others — During the year 1971-72, the Center staff members conducted, or assisted in conducting several new kinds of programs which were planned and carried out for others. In addition to expanding the services which the Center could offer to its larger community, these new "special programs" created broader opportunities for the Center's trained paraprofessionals.

The new "special programs" fell, roughly, into three categories:

1. *Leadership training programs.* As a result of its growing reputation as a training center for its volunteers, the Center was asked to train volunteers from other organizations, using the therapeutic peer concept. It conducted communication skills training programs for committee members of Junior League, employees of a government commission (in cooperation with Oakland University's Department of Education), ex-alcoholics, aging nuns, and retirees.
2. *"Modified" Investigation into Identity programs.* In the past, the Center held Demonstration Conferences on home ground so that representatives from other institutions and agencies could benefit by its experimentation. Center staff now traveled to provide on-the-spot leadership to other institutions interested in designing a similar program and who paid for the assistance. This effort was in

the form of a modified Investigation into Identity program adapted to fit the circumstances and paraprofessionals in new and different ways.

3. *"Minified" Communication Skills Workshops.* Requests for short term workshops come from widely diverse groups wanting communication tools to use within their own organizations.

An example of the experience the Continuum Center had with these special programs can be taken from the Center's record of its work with a group in Cincinnati. Leaders of various women's organizations in the Cincinnati area had been meeting for a year to discuss their own personal dilemmas in finding satisfactory uses for their middle years. They also wished to do something in their community to help other women like themselves.

The group sent a committee to the Continuum Center where the staff helped them work out an attack upon their problems. The plan involved three separate steps.

Step 1 — The Cincinnati committee designed (with the help of the Continuum Center staff) a three-hour workshop. A member of the Center staff was invited to fly to Cincinnati to floor-manage the day. 150 women attended this workshop. Their response encouraged the Cincinnati planning committee to proceed with the next step.

Step 2 — The committee invited members of the Continuum Center staff to offer a one-week Investigation into Identity program (meeting six hours each day) for its own leaders. The basic agenda for the Center's full-length Investigation into Identity program was used and one staff member, with the help of two volunteer group leaders from the Continuum Center and two counselors from the Cincinnati area, presented the course. The response of the 21 women who attended was enthusiastic. The Cincinnati planning committee was motivated to take the third step.

Step 3 — The Cincinnati group sent 12 women to the Continuum Center for one week of group leader training. These group leaders then assisted their own organization in carrying out a program in Cincinnati.

Promotion — Among the many activities which helped to promote the public image of the Center, speeches were especially affected.

Newsletters and brochures were published in varying sizes, shapes, and colors, and were mailed to individuals and organizations throughout the greater Detroit metropolitan area. These publications served as seasonal catalogs, notifying the public of courses, workshops, and conferences approximately a month before registration. The style was attractive, friendly, and informal. In addition to reaching the general public, the publications helped to maintain the interest of alumni and friends.

The press, particularly the newspapers of Pontiac and Detroit, helped to promote the Continuum Center by carrying feature articles which told the stories of clients and described special programs. Most of the articles carried pictures of staff members and clients. Radio announcements mentioned new courses and notified the public of enrollment dates. *Time* magazine included Eleanor Driver, the Center Director, in its "Gallery of American Women," thus providing nationwide publicity for the Center.

In-service training — The professional staff, program coordinators, and group leaders added to their knowledge and skills through a variety of in-service workshops and training sessions. The following experiences were included:

Six 3-hour sessions on "Human Sexuality": Group leaders with an experienced family life counselor discussed a variety of issues related to sexual issues in an effort to become more effective in helping Continuum Center clients cope with their own sexual problems.

A weekend on a "Conflict Utilization Laboratory": The staff and 26 group leaders worked with a National Training Laboratory psychologist, who was a member of the Education Department of Oakland University. The workshop was a combination of didactic and small-group work emphasizing creative ways to deal with conflict as it arises in work and interpersonal relationships.

A 2½ day meeting on "Using Havighurst's Development Tasks": Staff members and 36 group leaders worked in large groups and subgroups to determine creative ways for presenting to clients the developmental life cycle material of Havighurst.

A one-day session on "Helping Skills Exercises": The staff introduced 25 group leaders to the helping skills exercises in small group activities which used role playing.

Five three-hour sessions on a "Personal Growth" workshop: By combining this in-service experience with the Michigan Employment Security Commission Institute of Oakland University's Guidance and Counseling Department, 14 group leaders were able to work in small groups with 15 of the MESC trainees.

Two day sessions and one evening session on an "Introduction to and Planning for the Revised *Investigation into Identity* Program." The staff presented an overview of the year's activities and introduced the revised format for the fall program. Group leaders separated into subgroups to plan the new program's components. The day sessions were attended by 48 group leaders; the night session was attended by 14 group leaders who work in the Center's evening programs.

Regular "clinicing" sessions, which followed each session of the Investigation into Identity program, formed another kind of in-service training — and a particularly effective one. Group leaders met with a staff member to discuss the problems which had appeared during the day's work with clients and among the

co-leaders of that specific Investigation into Identity course. The entire agenda for the preceding session was reviewed and plans were discussed for the following session.

Participants consult with ***Dr. Elinor Waters*** *during Career Development course.*

Mirroring exercise demonstrating group leader's adaptability in leading or following — during in-service training.

CHAPTER III

THE TRAINING PROGRAM FOR GROUP LEADERS

The Continuum Center began using volunteer group leaders early in its history. "By the end of the first year (1965)," wrote a staff counselor, " 'alumni' of the basic program were available, and staff asked some of them to come to the first testing session (within each Investigation into Identity course) to help alleviate some of the clients' test anxiety by being models of women who had made it through the program." A few alumni responded to the invitation and helped the staff in a few orientation and testing sessions.

Some of the volunteer alumni began giving informal help to small groups during their discussion periods. The clients liked this kind of help with their group discussions, and the quality of the discussions improved. One spoke for her group when she said, "I'm sure each person went away with the comforting feeling that, even if she did have odd thoughts about being a traditional housewife, at least she had lots of interesting company." Staff members decided to increase the time allocated to supportive discussion with peers, and they recruited more volunteer alumni to assist small groups. The clients approved.

The increasingly active group of volunteer alumni asked if they might have some training in the techniques of leading discussions. The Center responded by providing six hours: two hours on the background and philosophy of the Center, two hours on basic group dynamics, and two hours of practicing skills to be used in leading small group discussion.

Professional members of the Center staff admitted their surprise at the willingness of these selected alumni to volunteer hours of service, and they expressed their pleasure at the high quality of that service. When three sessions were added to Investigation into Identity in 1968, the staff wanted to ask the discussion leaders to add the new sessions to their work load, but (in the words of the staff psychologist) they felt "this would be an imposition on these busy women who were rapidly moving in new directions. We solved this dilemma by asking them. The response was wholehearted support. We continued to recruit and train new volunteers, adding two hours to the primary training schedule, and we invited them to attend weekend conferences at the Cranbrook

Human Relations Institute — for which they assumed financial responsibility."

In 1969, the major change in the Continuum Center program, involving increased emphasis on group process, was being put into effect.[1] By this time the volunteer alumni were recognized as an integral and essential factor in the operation of the basic program. Their work had grown beyond "discussion leadership." A group leader training program was started. With added hours of training and a new emphasis on preventive mental health service, the former "discussion leaders" became "group leaders." Approximately 50 of these carefully selected, specially trained group leaders were registered with the Center by the end of 1969.

The staff psychologist described staff members' realization of what had developed in their midst when he wrote, "Much to our amazement, we discovered we had a 10 session Investigation into Identity program resting firmly on a dedicated, excited group of volunteers who were hungry to learn, eager to grow, and ready to give time, energy, and brains to the support of the Continuum Center."

Three years later, the Director of the Center reported the following situation:

> *One of the most exciting aspects of this seven-year experiment [1965-1972] in providing a program for women on the move is the use of volunteers as therapeutic peers. . . At this point in time, there are 80 volunteer group leaders registered with the Center. They have [each] received 46 hours of training which they have paid for themselves. . . They volunteer to work two programs a year which means giving 60 hours of time plus planning time. They also attend in-service workshops at least four times a year.*

The training program for group leaders evolved into a three-part activity: (1) the selecting, training, and in-service supervision of the Center's volunteer group leaders; (2) the staff-level activity of a small group of them selected to be program coordinators; (3) the training of group leaders for other organizations. The Center's rationale for the program follows.

RATIONALE

Although the use of lay personnel was a departure from the traditional method of providing counseling, such a procedure was being recognized by several experts in the field of mental health as one way of extending professional mental health services. And almost all the experts in the field agreed that the supply of professional counseling fell far short of the need.

Reports of research in counseling by lay therapists demonstrated that housewife-mothers could be trained to perform effectively. It was learned from "client comments" that the underlying reasons

for recruiting volunteer alumni to help with small group discussion included: (1) a need to reassure timid housewife-mothers that they could take standardized tests; that they could learn from a course of self-study, (2) a need to create a challenging opportunity for volunteer work in a convenient, suburban location; and (3) a need to augment the services of a small staff. Until 1969, this rationale remained essentially the same. There were more volunteers each year and they received more training, but they were thought of, primarily, as housewife-mother models with special training and experience who could be helpful to other, inexperienced housewife-mothers.

After 1969, the words "Therapeutic peer" and "paraprofessionals" appeared in reports prepared by members of the Continuum Center staff. The underlying reasons for training group leaders became a mixture of the early rationale and the new concept. "Mature women" were *still acting as* "helpers for other mature women" and they were also "peer counselors" in a trained, paraprofessional role.

A rationale for the new emphasis included the following factors:

1. A need to recognize and meet the increased sophistication of a "successful" Center's clientele and public.
2. A need to cope with a financial deadline: the approaching completion of the period of funding by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.
3. A need to capitalize on a reciprocal phenomenon which marked the years after 1969: new and more varied course offerings gave paraprofessional group leaders more challenge and opportunity, and a challenged, developing group of paraprofessionals stimulated the Center to design new and more varied course offerings.

TRAINING GROUP LEADERS

Research has revealed a definite correlation between a therapist's demonstration of accurate empathy, self-congruence, and non-possessive warmth and the therapeutic outcome for the patient or client. Therefore, the initial screening was a process of general watchfulness by staff and group leaders for alumni who possessed such qualities.

Selecting alumni for training — The first recommendation of a graduate of an Investigation into Identity course usually came from a group leader who became acquainted with the graduate while she was a client in the small group work of the course. The group leader would mention such qualities as sensitivity, perceptiveness, and ability to be non-judgmental, and an ability to grow. A staff member would then invite the potential candidate to consider training.

The following excerpt from a letter of invitation sent by the Director to recommended persons on June 30, 1971, indicates the conditions that potential candidates accepted:

> *We are going to do a group leader training program. . . We hope you will be interested in participating with us even though the first step does not mean instant success. . .*
>
> *We ask: (1) you to allow yourself to be tested for the qualities we look for in leaders — genuineness, empathy, and warmth — and to risk being rejected by a psychological evaluation; (2) you to commit yourself to a 3-hour testing session and an interview, and if accepted, to attend 7 [later 8] training days — 6 hours a day; (3) if you are accepted, to pay $25.00 for this training, because our funds will no longer provide for this; (4) you also to volunteer for group leading for at least 2 programs a year and more if you are interested — most gals do 4 or 5 programs because they like it and it suits their life style.*
>
> *In return we promise to stretch your mind and feelings, to create opportunities for personal growth, to allow you to become involved in the meaningful and exciting process of encouraging others like yourself to be all they can be. None of it is easy, but we are coming to believe that most people are asking for challenges — indeed, need challenges — to feel alive.*

If the response was one of interest, a staff member would ask the prospective candidate to write a statement on why she wanted to be a group leader and what she felt she could contribute as a group leader. She was then asked to take a small battery of tests and to participate in a group interview.

The battery of tests consisted of an adaptation of the Carkhuff Index of Discrimination, an incomplete sentences test and a request to write an open-ended response to a hypothetical situation. The Center staff followed Carkhuff's principle of selection: "The best index of a future criterion is a previous index of that criterion." In other words, prospective candidates who had some initial feeling for the most helpful response were promising prospects who could be expected to become group leaders able to use the most helpful response in a given situation.

The incomplete sentences test was used primarily to screen out people whose personal problems might interfere with their being effective helpers. The hypothetical case to which an applicant was asked to respond involved a not unusual situation in which a participant shares her intense feelings of depression and frustration shortly before a group is scheduled to break up. In evaluating applicant responses to this test case, the staff looked for such things as the extent to which the applicant was able to help the client articulate her feelings and reflect them back to her, whether or not the applicant could deal with the time issue,

whether or not she mentioned possible ways of clarifying or working on the problem before the next session, and whether or not she took note of the rest of the group in her response.

The group interview constituted a change in the selection procedure. The earlier method had involved the arranging of a private interview for each applicant with one of the Center's consulting psychologists. As the number of candidates involved in the group leader training programs increased, however, this became a rather cumbersome procedure. It was replaced with a two-hour group interview led by staff counselors.

The advantage of the group interview (in addition to a smaller investment of time and money) lay in the early introduction of the group-work concept. Since a group leader would be doing most of her work with groups, a candidate for that position needed to learn as soon as possible the concept that was involved, and the staff needed to know as soon as possible how a candidate functioned in a group situation.

In a typical group interview, six to eight applicants met with two staff members. Each applicant was asked to select one person in the group whom she did not know and to interview her in such a way that she and the group would get to know that person. After the initial exchange, the staff members asked of both interviewer and interviewee questions such as the following: What did you learn about this person? Did she ask questions that would enable the group to know you? Were you comfortable with each other? The staff members were thus able to assess listening skills, openness, and willingness to take risks. Feedback to these interviewers from staff members as well as from the other applicants in the group provided each candidate with a small sample of the Center's approach to the training of group leaders, and it enabled each candidate to develop a tentative agenda for her personal work in the training program which she would find valuable if she was accepted for training.

The training program — Each training program was different from all those that preceded or followed it. Each particular group of trainees provided raw material for the program; each group shaped the program with individual reactions. The goals, however, remained fairly constant, and they provided a stability which strengthened the training value of spontaneous acting.

The general goals for the training program involved helping participants learn to:

1. Provide a positive interpersonal environment.
2. Understand more specifically the components of the basic program, Investigation into Identity.
3. Learn certain counseling techniques.
4. Increase awareness of one's own personality dimensions.

Both didactic and experimental procedures were used within a group dynamics theoretical framework. The approach was an

eclectic one, using techniques drawn from adult education, traditional group psychotherapy, and humanistic psychology. Participants were encouraged to gain insight into their own characteristic behaviors as a prelude to becoming effective helpers.

Statistics of the training program planned for November and December, 1969, were as follows:

Number of participants	12 to 20
Number of staff	2
Sessions allotted for training	8
Hours allotted to each session	6

The following is a summary of the agenda for the November and December, 1969, training program.

Session 1 — "Genuineness or Self-Congruence of the Leader."

Each training session was started with a request for silence on the part of participants, and background music was provided by tape. An introductory exercise involved participants being asked to walk about the room and choose a place to sit where they would be most comfortable, protected, at ease; then to walk about and choose an uncomfortable spot, sitting there long enough to soak up an understanding of why it was uncomfortable. Was the discomfort related to other people, colors, sunshine, physical comfort? Then all were requested to share their feelings as honestly (genuinely) as possible.

Each participant was asked to write her expectations for the training and something about her personal agenda: the tendencies in her own self that she would like to shape differently.

Discussion, role play, and group exercises dealt with various aspects of "genuineness." A 15-minute wrap-up for the day included suggestions for constant attentiveness to being congruent as much as possible in all human relationships, outside as well as in the training program.

Session 2 — "Empathy."

When the leader of this session explained the goal for the day, she presented empathic understanding, or accurate empathy, as more susceptible than genuineness and warmth to misinterpretation. She explained that empathy involved both the sensitivity to current feelings and the verbal facility to communicate this understanding in a language attuned to the client's current feelings; the message "I am with you" would be unmistakably clear. The helper's responses would not only indicate a sensitive understanding of the apparent feelings but would serve to clarify and expand the client's awareness of her own feelings or experiences. This would be communicated by appropriate language and also by the total voice qualities which would reflect the seriousness, the intentness, and the depth of feeling.

Discussion, role play, and group exercises followed. One of the exercises involved dividing participants into small groups of five or six, and having them sit on the floor in a circle so that they

touched each other — with all of them facing outward. Then the participants discussed an emotion-laden subject such as the drug problem, abortion, pre-marital sex, extra-marital sex, or the war. Each person had to listen and restate to the speaker's satisfaction both content and the feeling of that statement *before* she was allowed to contribute her own thoughts and ideas. After completing the exercise, the entire group discussed its value.

The device of restating the previous speaker's content and feeling level to her satisfaction was used in other exercises until the participant's listening and perceiving skills had improved sufficiently to try discussion without restatement. If the group continued the restatement exercise long enough, perceptions deepened and real listening became easier and more rewarding.

Session 3 — "Non-Possessive Warmth."

The leader explained that unconditional, positive regard (non-possessive warmth) meant an acceptance of each participant as a person with human potentialities. It involved the valuing of the participant as a person without contamination from evaluation of her behavior or her thoughts.

An exercise involved eating lunch alone. With eyes shut, the participants talked about their feelings. Did they feel weak or strong? If they felt weak, they moved to one end of the table; if strong, to the other — or somewhere in between. Discussion followed in which the total group shared feelings about eating alone. Then the total group divided into small groups of three with a problem presenter, a helper, and an observer in each triad. Discussion followed in each triad, and the participants worked for expression of warmth and concern, but avoided a need to tell others how to do and to be.

Session 4 — "When Is Help Helpful? When Is Normal not Normal?"

Participants in group discussion considered "What is normal?" What would be the proper expectations for this group work? What would be outside the normal range? When should outside resources be tapped? Who should do it? A list of resources was made. The participants and leaders discussed the subject of clients who were in therapy.

Session 5 — "Defensive Communications."

The day was devoted to a series of role plays in which various problem situations were played in a defensive climate, then replayed in a supportive climate. Discussion was used to clarify and define the differences.

Session 6 — "Self-Image: What Is It? Where Does It Come From? What Sustains It?"

Two kinds of activities were scheduled for this session: a picture-drawing exercise during the morning and skill practice in group leading during the afternoon. A five-step outline of the picture-drawing exercise follows:

1. Each person drew a picture of how she saw herself as a group leader.
2. Group commented on what they saw in each picture.
3. Each person responded, explaining her own thoughts and feelings about her picture and about the comments that had been made concerning it.
4. Group changed the individual pictures as they felt changes were appropriate.
5. Each person whose picture was changed expressed her feelings about those changes.

Session 7 — "Skill Practice in Leading."

An exercise was used at the end of the session which involved writing "prescriptions." Members wrote prescriptions for each person in the group. For example, "Continue to use your gifts for making people comfortable; remember you are perceptive and wise. Have the courage to make interventions when your instinct tells you to. Trust that instinct and risk with it. We group leaders, as well as clients, learn from our mistakes."

Session 8 — "Reviewing Unfamiliar Parts of the Investigation into Identity Program."

Participants discussed the agenda of the Investigation into Identity program. They practiced administering the exercises used in the program and discussed their purposes. They did the same with the tests and the occupational interest survey. Time was allowed for questions and suggestions — and for signing up to group-lead the winter and spring courses.

In-service training for group leaders — Continuous, ongoing training (and supervision) accompanied the work of those group leaders who stayed with the Continuum Center. This in-service program, while carried out in an atmosphere of easy formality and warm friendship was organized around three types of activity. They were "clinicing," staff-group leader meetings, and periodic opportunities for additional in-service training.

"Clinicing" was the term used at the Center for the regular, short conferences which accompanied each Investigation into Identity course. A staff member met with the group leaders assisting in the course, not only before the course started, but after each session. Together they discussed any problems in the work with clients or any questions between co-leaders, and they went over the agenda for the next session. Both the professional staff and the paraprofessionals benefited from this learning situation.

Staff-group leader meetings were part of the Center's plan to insure a responsible participation in the Center's program by the volunteer group leaders. The administration of approximately 80 volunteer paraprofessionals required time, skill, and administrative wisdom. The summaries of two meetings reflect this aspect of the responsibility placed upon a small professional staff by the use of a large group of volunteers.

Agenda: What are group leader standards for on-the-job performance? (There is a need for giving negative feedback to those group leaders who are performing below standards set for the program. Perhaps only a few are involved — the staff could talk to those particular ones.)

Agenda: Discuss; offer additions or elaborations to the following "Standards for Group Leaders" which were developed at last month's meeting:

Standards for Group Leaders

1. Must have had initial group leader training.
2. Thereafter, group leaders must spend a specified time (a) doing Investigation into Identity programs; (b) participating in in-service training; and (c) doing a tape review, perhaps one of each group leader per year.
3. Group leaders should avoid using Investigation into Identity group discussions to work on their own personal problems.
4. They should be receptive to feedback from other group leaders, co-leaders, coordinators, and staff.
5. Desirable group leader behavior includes:
   a. Being attentive to members of the group (while assisting with Investigation into Identity).
   b. Avoiding advice-giving.
   c. Being non-judgmental.
   d. Using empathetic, accurate listening.
   e. Attending to non-verbal cues.
   f. Acting on and staying with problem area cues.
   g. Being perceptive and aware of group dynamics (i.e. non-contributors, monopolizers, etc.).
   h. Functioning as a co-leader and all that implies — sharing, trusting, being open to feedback, owning own feelings, building on each other's interventions.

Agenda: Discuss; add to and elaborate on the following ways to resolve problems of below standard performance:

   a. Avoid the occurrence if at all possible.
   b. Identify the problem in a conference between group leader and staff counselor.
   c. Explore options and alternatives in a conference between group leader and staff members.
   d. Staff suggest a temporary leave.
   e. Staff suggest a permanent leave.
   f. Adopt a policy of everyone — group leaders, co-leaders, coordinators, and staff — being "straighter" with group leaders and doing this more promptly in order to allow earlier self-correction. Every effort should be made to avoid a buildup of bad performance; and

by avoiding the buildup, also avoid the necessity of an end-of-the-line staff decision.

The third type of in-service activity consisted of periodic opportunities for additional training in the philosophies and techniques of leadership. Several conferences and workshops were planned each year, and frequently they were led by a well-known specialist. Staff members, group leaders, and other interested persons shared these opportunities.

RECOGNIZING CERTAIN GROUP LEADERS AS PROGRAM COORDINATORS

From the group of volunteer leaders, the staff members selected several outstanding women to serve as paid "program coordinators" for the Center. A brochure announcing the fall, 1972, program listed 14 Program Coordinators under a special heading: Adjunct Staff.

These program coordinators directed the 10 Investigation into Identity courses which were conducted in various locations during the year 1971-72. Their work was supervised by the Center staff, and they were assisted by group leaders. The fact, however, that there was no longer a staff member present at each session placed new and definite responsibility upon the program coordinator who conducted the course. Staff members supervised the work of program coordinators, as they did that of group leaders, by clinicing with them after each session of all courses.

A statement made by a program coordinator attests to the value which Adjunct Staff members attached to their staff relationship. This coordinator wrote, "I have attended staff meetings and have witnessed program evaluation and design. . . These experiences have provided a new dimension to my sense of professionalism."

New kinds of special programs opened up different opportunities for the program coordinators. For example: (1) A special "pilot program," adapted from the Investigation into Identity program, was designed for a community college and presented with the assistance of two coordinators and three group leaders. (2) The Education Department of Oakland University hired two coordinators who, with the assistance of a volunteer group leader, led a group experience for members of an institute the Department was hosting. (3) Coordinators were invited to participate in designing and leading special programs for other schools and many organizations in a variety of locations. This recognition of their skills by groups outside the Center sometimes led to full-time volunteer or paid employment which took them away from the Center's program. Staff members of the Center, however, looked upon such a loss as an indication that their group leader training program was a success.

TRAINING GROUP LEADERS FOR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

As the capabilities and talents of the Program Coordinators became known in the community, they were invited to lead many group meetings on a volunteer basis. They worked in rap groups, drug groups, in mental health centers, in their churches, and with people who were thrashing out race problems. Their success in such volunteer activities led members of the community to ask the Continuum Center to train volunteer group leaders for other organizations.

Staff members of the Center looked upon such requests as welcome opportunities. They believed in the therapeutic peer concept. In other words, they were convinced that a member of almost any group who possessed empathy, self-congruence or genuineness, and non-possessive warmth could, with a small amount of judicious training, use her intimate knowledge of the problems and resources of her group to help her group solve its problem. The Center had tested the concept in its experience with its own group leaders and had found the concept to be sound. The Director said, "It's exciting to see this concept in action because it works — it really works."

During the year 1971-72, the Continuum Center conducted leadership training programs for six organizations. In addition, short-term communication skills workshops (to introduce the type of work done by the Center) were conducted for five organizations. Of these short-term, introductory workshops, one led to a longer-term, modified Investigation into Identity program; another led to a leadership training program. The year was one of exploration and experimentation for the Center in the new area of training group leaders for other organizations. A brief summary of the Center's experience follows. (Since each program was designed to fill a specific request from a specific organization, each program was different.)

A program involving 7 days of 6-hour sessions — The goal stated for this training program was, "Prepare 16 nuns to lead small groups for other nuns." The problem was aging — the Sisters were experiencing trouble adjusting to the process of growing old in their teaching order. They planned with the Center for the training of "facilitators" for a later educational program of their own which would be designed to help 60 other nuns.

The plan allowed time for personal growth as well as for teaching group leader techniques and for some more general understanding of group process.

A program involving 6 days of 6-hour sessions — The Center cooperated with the Education Department of Oakland University in conducting a group leader training program for 19 employees of a government commission.

A program involving 5 days totaling 27 hours — The goal was to train 10 non-drinking alcoholics to lead groups for persons who needed help but had not yet admitted their alcoholism.

A problem which developed in this group was a reminder to program coordinators and staff that work with persons who are themselves burdened with problems can be alarming, discouraging — and exciting.

Each of the 10 participants had been instructed to draw a picture of himself to show how he saw himself as a helper. The discussion of the pictures extracted a wealth of material which was valuable for personal growth and for reinforcing leadership skills, but the material could not be processed for the entire group of participants because of one member's need to control. The group became hung up on this one member's problem and his resistance to accepting any feedback that would help him improve his leadership skills. In spite of this block, however, each participant learned much from the poor example.

Summary

The professional staff of the Center recognized the necessity of supervising the work of paraprofessionals. Some objectors to the growing use of paraprofessionals in counseling have pointed out that such workers do not have the "internalized values of a professional discipline." Certainly they have not had years of professional training and the association with other professionals which accompanies those years. Clear recognition of this difference marks the Center's program of in-service training for group leaders and program coordinators. The clinicing following each session of group leading, the periodic workshops and conferences, and the frequent staff-group leader meetings form a back-up system of staff support which has proved effective in assuring responsible service on the part of the paraprofessionals.

Continuum Center staff take possession of "The Farmhouse" (Meadow Brook Estate) as their new home — January, 1971.

CHAPTER IV
MATTERS OF MANAGEMENT

Experimental programs do not have patterns to follow. The ways in which they are managed vary as widely as the nature of their inquiries and services. A few hazards, however, appear in the histories of many funded, educational programs; and the persons responsible for guiding experimental programs become keenly aware of them. Those hazards prompt the following questions:

1. How can an experimental program be evaluated accurately?
2. How can an experimental program survive after its original funding comes to an end?
3. Can an experimental program developed as a response to a certain combination of social circumstances continue (after that combination changes) by adapting to a new combination of circumstances? If so, how does it establish its priorities?
4. Must an experimental program be the shadow of a person?

The Continuum Center has been working out its answers to these questions since the day it was opened in 1965. The first, second, and third questions will continue to be matters for serious study by the staff and the Center's Advisory Board, by Oakland University, and by many other friends of the Center. They are considered further under the headings "Evaluating the Program," "Paying for the Program," and "Establishing Priorities."

The fourth question, however, has been answered by the seven-year history of the Center. The Continuum Center has already had two strong leaders and is now being administered by its third Director:

Priscilla Jackson, 1965-69;
Gerald Self, 1969-70;
Eleanor Driver, Director, from 1971.

As early as October, 1966, a visitor to the Center wrote:

> *The project lives up to its billing, and I believe it is involved in some very important pioneering work. One point of concern is the dependence it has on the Program Director whose enthusiasm and ability breathe life into the ideas. Much of the program revolves around her, and without her leadership I am not sure this would be nearly as successful. Replication in another setting without this Director might be difficult.*

This Director, herself, took steps to avoid overdependence upon her leadership. Able staff members were encouraged to take training in professional areas which could offer fresh insight into the basic program. Highly qualified specialists were employed on the staff and were given wide fields of responsibility. Consulting specialists added new viewpoints. And after four years, she stepped out of the position which was then filled by the psychologist who had worked closely with her in a staff position after his employment in 1967.

The contribution of each Director, in cooperation with an able and loyal staff, has been significant: the development of an idea, the selling of a program, the redevelopment of vital aspects of that idea and program, the structuring of a training program to turn available womanpower into paraprofessional staff, the continuing evaluation of feedback, the continuing questioning of priorities, and the continuing search for funds. In only seven years, many persons had nurtured the growth of the Continuum Center.

EVALUATING THE PROGRAM

Evaluation is a difficult and necessary enterprise; and the Continuum Center worked patiently with the feedback from its basic program. From the beginning, the Center used the survey type of evaluation. The fact that the basic program was a self-study program led its clients to be particularly outgoing toward staff members and, therefore, to provide the Center with a wealth of feedback. Some responses came from informal encounters between clients and staff, but most of the recorded feedback was the result of, first, a survey based on a telephone "call-back," then a questionnaire and form letter, and later, a "Feedback Sheet."

Survey by telephone call-back — The call was made by a counselor approximately six months after the end of the Investigation into Identity course. Before dialing the client's number, the counselor scanned her file in order to have in mind her family situation, her problems and goals (if any), her abilities, and the reasons she had given for enrolling in the course.

Feedback was not the only purpose of a call. Assurance of continued interest by the Center, encouragement toward whatever goal the client had chosen, and counseling, if the conversation provided an opportunity for it, were all possibilities when a staff counselor prepared to make a telephone call-back. Client response to these calls was enthusiastic — understandably — but the calls were time-consuming. As the number of former clients increased, the burden of making long counseling-calls grew more questionable. The feedback was becoming less useful to the Center because many of the women simply told the Center that its program *was* helping. The assurance of continued interest would not be as

warm by form letter, but "assurance of continued interest" was a personal touch that had to be given up in the interests of economy and efficiency.

Survey by questionnaire and form letter — A form letter was sent to all graduates of the Investigation into Identity course explaining the Center's need for their frank reactions to the course. A questionnaire was enclosed which asked the following questions:

1. Did the testing program accomplish your purpose in taking it, or did you learn something valuable you were not expecting?
2. What have you done or what are you planning to do (if anything) in the form of a new step?
3. Have you suggestions for improvement of this program?
4. How would you assess your personal evaluation hour with the psychologist?
5. If you saw the Employment, Education, or Volunteer Service Adviser, was this a useful interview?
6. Did your husband have any particular reaction to your experience in the testing program? Did you share your thinking with him? If you have made a new step, is he approving of your endeavors?
7. Do you have any remembered reaction to "The Eight Stages" tape?
8. — any remembered reaction to the Investigation into Identity session in which all three of the Employment, Volunteer Service, and Education Advisers spoke to you?
9. — any remembered reaction to the talk on Decision-Making? — on Circle of Influences?
10. Have you other comments?

Survey by "Feedback Sheet" — In 1969, a one-sheet form was handed to participants at the end of a course, and they were asked to check or write their response to each of nine questions — and to add any other comments they wished to make. The sheet carried this statement at the top: As you know, the Investigation into Identity program is constantly being revised. In trying to make changes which will improve it, we rely very heavily on the feedback we get from women who have taken the program. So please think about this carefully and give us your honest opinions. You may sign your name or not, as you wish. (Please use the back to write your comments if there isn't enough space on the front.)

The questions were:

1. Was the course generally useful to you?
   Yes _____ Somewhat (yes and no) _____ No _____
2. In what ways was the program particularly helpful? (Please be as specific as possible.)
3. In what ways might it have been more helpful? (Again, be as specific as possible.)

4. How satisfied were you with the way your group leaders functioned?
   Very satisfied ___ Somewhat satisfied ___ Unsatisfied ___
5. In what ways were your group leaders particularly helpful?
6. In what ways could they have been more helpful?
7. Do you have a better understanding of yourself and your abilities now than you did before you started this program?
   Yes _____ Somewhat _____ No _____
8. How do you *feel* about yourself now compared with how you felt about yourself before you investigated your identity?
   Much better ____ A little better ____ About the same ____
   A little worse _____ Much worse _____
9. Do you feel that your relationships with your family and other people have changed in any way since you started the program?
   Much better ____ A little better ____ About the same ____
   A little worse ____ Much worse ____

MAINTAINING CLIENT FILES

All information about or from a client (enrolled in Investigation into Identity) went into her client file. Long after the end of her participation in the program, her file was "active." These files provided (and they are continuing to provide) a detailed picture of the work of the Center with each woman who enrolled in the basic program.

The material that went into client files was protected as strictly confidential. When interns and other researchers used the material, they used it in abstracted form. Each case was anonymous.

The Center found that there were many uses for client files. The staff psychologist, the education, volunteer service, and employment advisers, and the staff counselors referred to the information in a client's file whenever they held an interview with that client. After the client "graduated" from the Center, her file continued to be the basis for referrals (augmenting the separate "Skills Registry").

PAYING FOR THE PROGRAM

The financial understanding, in 1965, between the Division of Continuing Education (of Oakland University) and the Director of the new Continuum Center was to the effect that (1) Oakland University would provide space and equipment (desks, telephones, typewriters, and reception area furniture, for example) and the Director's salary and expenses; (2) fees would be charged for the services offered by the Center; and (3) the three-year grant of $150,000 from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, would

pay the salaries of other staff members and such specialists as the fees did not finance.

During the early years of the Center, setting the fee for the basic program entailed discussion and concern. The Director described a typical procedure in the following statement:

> *Setting the fee for the program is always difficult. One would like to give the program away. But since a fee is necessary, here are some factors to consider.*
>
> *First, the housewife-mother on the staff tends to think that the price is too high, no matter what it is. This is due partly to her incredulity that her services are actually worth paying for, and it is also due to her understanding of the guilt housewives feel at spending money on themselves — their sense of obligation to use their husband's hard-earned money for the family's benefit.*
>
> *Second, staff psychologists and educators are wary of a price so high that it seems they are 'making money.' The third tendency is to guess what housewives will pay and to set the quality of the program to fit that figure.*
>
> *Our decision followed a fourth pattern. We designed the best program that we could. Then we tried to describe it so that prospective clients understood it was a quality program. (Usually their husbands recognized this before they did. Husbands have often said that $85.00 is very reasonable for the professional services offered.)*
>
> *Our next step was to estimate the cost and the enrollment, and divide the second into the first. Since the resulting figure was likely to be higher than we had expected and higher than the housewife would probably pay, we tried to subsidize a portion of the cost by money-raising. Then we cut out expensive and less useful parts of the program, recruited volunteers, and sought scholarships.*
>
> *At that point we set the price that we had to set. Our first fee for the Investigation into Identity program was $45.00. We raised that to $85.00 in the fall of 1967. Each time we raised the fee with misgivings, but each time we were happily surprised to find that the higher fee did not lower, noticeably the annual number of clients.*

The Continuum Center found that conferences were rarely profit-making and often failed to pay even direct costs. Continuing education courses, on the other hand, did pay for themselves. The Investigation into Identity program, staffed as it was with psychologists, counselors, and specialist advisers, cost more than twice the sum of the fees collected for it.

The Center maintained a list of local and national scholarships available to adult women and was, now and then, able to help a potential client secure one of them. It also solicited scholarships from Center alumni, from the alumni of Oakland University, and

from local organizations and philanthropists.

Every possible economy was exercised. Every gift was gratefully received and probably the greatest of these was the donation of time which the volunteer discussion leaders gave to the Center. Their time, plus that of volunteer abstractors, a key-puncher, a historian, clerical aides, speakers, and leaders of the "Offshoot" courses, (the courses that were offered in addition to Investigation into Identity) was estimated to have been worth $30,000 during the year 1968-69.

By 1971-72 the financial picture had changed in some of its details. The Fall, 1972, fees were:

Investigation into Identity, Stage I	$55.00
Continued Investigation, Stage II	
Personal Growth	35.00
Career Development	35.00
Career Development for Men and Women	35.00
Communication Training for Couples (per couple)	75.00
Gestalt Awareness Training	45.00
Parent Education Workshop	45.00
The Creative Problem Solving Process	25.00
The Life Cycle	30.00
Transactional Analysis	40.00
Individual Counseling	15.00
Human Relations Training for Men	75.00
Persons Alone	35.00
Life Planning Weekend (per couple)	40.00

(The fee for an individual interview with a member of the professional staff was $15.00.)

For the last year of the grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, in order to prepare for independent functioning, the Center arrived at an approximate overhead figure by simple cost accounting methods. In addition to the usual direct costs (rentals, materials, tests, etc.), a percentage of this overhead figure was applied to each income-producing program — Investigation into Identity and 'Offshoot' programs. As the Center's new group leader training and in-service training were not intended to be income-producing, no overhead was applied to them.

Investigation into Identity program (296 participants)

Total income from 10 programs, 1971-72	$25,020.00
Total expenses for 10 programs, 1971-72	20,719.80
Net income from I.I.I. programs	$ 4,300.20

Co-sponsored conferences (2)

Total income, 1971-72	$ 2,358.50
Total expenses, 1971-72	2,027.39
Net income	$ 331.11

New group leader training

Total income, 1971-72	$ 1,200.00
Total expenses (no overhead reflected)	343.20
Net income	$ 856.80

In-service training

Total income, 1971-72	$ 1,520.00
Total expenses (no overhead reflected)	543.60
Net income	$ 976.40

Special programs

Total income, 1971-72	$ 5,437.50
Total expenses, 1971-72	2,051.67
Net income	$ 3,385.83

Scholarship fund, 1971-72

Monies received	$ 255.00
Monies donated	285.00
Difference paid out of fund balance	$ −30.00

NEW HEADQUARTERS

In January of 1971 the Continuum Center established its new headquarters in Meadow Brook Farmhouse on the east edge of Oakland University's campus. As they moved their offices, the members of the staff looked forward to a time when they might be able to develop the Farmhouse "into a human growth center to continue and expand the Center's present service and training functions for the benefit of the University and the greater community."

The Center's new Advisory Board consisted of 16 members who had accepted the request that they "guide the progress of the Continuum Center as it strives to provide a relevant service to the community in the future." Of the 16 members, nine were employed on the staff of Oakland University where they represented the fields of psychology, communications, continuing education, sociology and anthropology, education, and guidance and counseling. The other seven were a personnel manager, a minister, a professor of guidance and counseling in another university, an officer of a bank, and three were in the field of mental health.

The following excerpt from the minutes of one of the meetings was pertinent to many of the problems of the Center: "J. . . raised

the question of whether our being part of Continuing Education was a historical accident or a confirmed philosophy. More specifically, have we ever asked to be an integral part of the University, receiving funds from it?" The staff member who wrote the minutes added the comment, "This is, indeed, an intriguing idea to explore."

PLANNING FOR FUTURE SERVICE

In terms of the crowded, evolving, and brief history of the Continuum Center, its "future" is close at hand. For example, the Fall, 1972, brochure set in operation, through its listing of a new course in two stages, the "stronger educational framework for Investigation into Identity: which was mentioned late in 1971 as one of several "guiding principles" underlying the Continuum Center's changing program. A merging of the items in three lists of "guides" and "goals" reveals some of the basic planning for future service that was taking place in the deliberations of Center staff members during 1971-72.

CONTINUUM CENTER GOALS

The first 11 items were thought of as "guiding principles" and factors in the Center's "rationale for a flexible, changing, program." The final three items were "long-range goals."

1. Work toward financial survival with assistance from:
   a. The National Institute of Mental Health proposal in the form of a grant to fund the training of group leaders for other organizations.
   b. The Advisory Board in the form of advice, leadership, and assistance.
   c. Oakland University, and other universities and colleges which can give credit for courses taken in the Continuum Center's program, in the form of the stability and financial assistance that such recognition could mean.
   d. The community in the form of interest in and use of the courses and other assistance offered by the Continuum Center.
2. Work toward program survival in the form of:
   a. Shorter programs for less money.
   b. Programs that offer more choices to the community.
   c. Programs that stay ahead of community needs (in the sense of anticipating new needs and being ready to meet them.
   d. Serving those who compete with the Center (and who offer similar services for less money) by training their leadership.
3. Use the Center's paraprofessionals in new and different ways appropriate to the skills, growth, and personal career goal of each paraprofessional.

4. Allow more autonomy in the Investigation into Identity program. This would give the program coordinators and group leaders more options in their management of each session.
5. Be a resource center which would provide consultation to other groups needing programs.
6. Expand Center programs and services intended for men as well as those intended for women.
7. Become more independent of outside specialists (such as psychologists) in carrying out the Center's regular program (such as the "clinicing" of group leaders in the Investigation into Identity program and the selection of prospective group leaders).
8. Encourage members of the Center's professional staff to participate in professional meetings appropriate to their various fields, and thereby give the Center national exposure at the professional level.
9. Adopt a more educational framework (as compared to the recent emphasis on a therapeutic model) for the Investigation into Identity program. Make the program more "action oriented" by increasing the emphasis on a client's choice of a next step.
10. Remember that change creates challenges, encourages growth, and keeps interest alive.
11. Expand special "Leadership Training Programs" for off-campus groups such as the nuns, the "olders," and the alcoholics with whom the Center worked in 1971-72.
12. Keep in mind the following *long-range goals:*
    a. To *develop a Life Planning Center* which would respond to crises times in the lives of individual people.
    Program development would proceed in terms of young people and adult men and women — the potential clients of the Center.
    Investigation into Identity would continue to serve women; the Communications Workshop would continue to serve men. The Center should continue to find confidence and strength in the knowledge that it provides programs and a climate where reevaluation of self and work can take place, and where change can be initiated. And it should act upon its conviction that women and men want, not only to add new, useful work dimensions to their lives, but to increase their enjoyment in living and working with each other.
    b. *To serve the community of Greater Metropolitan Detroit* by training paraprofessionals and professionals to be facilitators, helpers, and leaders in both paid and unpaid jobs. (The Center had begun to function in this capacity.) Staff members of the Center believe that the work of creating a community is better accomplished by people

who respond authentically as credible, responsive, and genuine people — whether they are responding as individuals or as members of society.

c. *To serve the University community* (of Oakland University) by offering:
   a. A retreat-like atmosphere where assessing, evaluating, and planning can take place at low cost and with maximum comfort.
   b. Courses for students, both young and adult, in the field of leadership, decision-making, and communication — courses which could be incorporated into the regular curriculums of various departments that would find them valuable additions. (The Center had begun to do this in a small way for the Education Department.)

   Staff members of the Center believe that tasks are accomplished, decisions made, and goals met when people are used well. They also believe that people function better when they are treated well. The University needs an environment that allows for the kind of inter-personal exchange which helps to answer affirmatively the questions: Are we treating ourselves and others well? Are we and others being well used?

CONTINUUM CENTER MANAGEMENT

As the Center pursued carefully considered goals, its staff members noted many small matters of management. Some of these miscellaneous matters have been acted upon; some have affected the growth of the Center; others were merely noted as problems with no present solutions — or perhaps solutions that had eluded them.

The following list offers a few of these miscellaneous matters of management:

1. How can a staff cope more adequately with "walk-ins"? These are the people who make a brief, unscheduled stop at the Center to ask a question such as, "Could I enroll in the Investigation into Identity course, but not take any of the tests?" Almost any educational organization has to cope with a few people who want, or need, to change the program. Large staffs include a person who is able to handle such individual cases, but a small staff seldom has such a person at the door when the visitor walks in. Consequently, such individual cases are not always handled as well as they could be.

2. How can a staff reach the woman (the man or young person) who needs the help of the program, but needs other help first to solve preliminary problems? This is, of course, the continuing

dilemma of helping agencies. In the case of the Continuum Center, the clients tended to be reasonably able, fairly independent, and rather affluent women who were already beginning to be "on the move." They had a car (or could come to the Center with a neighbor who had one). They had the courage to seek the program once they had heard (or read) that an organization existed to help them find their own "better life style." But what about those who did not hear? or could not come?

3. Why should not placement bureaus everywhere emphasize the placement of mothers (and perhaps certain other special groups) in part-time permanent positions? The Director of the Center wrote, "If we wish to keep women as mothers-in-residence, they must have some way to be part of the world — outside the home — as they always were on the farm in the village."

4. How can a staff which trains paraprofessionals for other organizations assure the continuing growth and the in-service responsibility of those trainees? The Center provided carefully planned in-service training and supervision for its own paraprofessional staff (both paid and volunteer). It did not, of course, have this opportunity in the case of those trainees who left the Center after their training to work in other organizations. Center staff members knew that any institution providing vocational preparation must face this same cut-off point at the end of the training period. They noted the problem in this way: Can a training institution teach trainees in a short period of time how to continue learning? How to want to continue learning? How to guard the responsibility of their own service? Can the training institution influence other organizations toward providing adequate in-service training and supervision?

"WOMEN ON THE MOVE," 1972

The period from 1965 to 1972 was one of change, not only in the Continuum Center, but spectacularly so in the nation as a whole. Even the small segment of the national scene most closely related to the Center, that of programs for women, had seen much change. In 1966, the Center's Director had found 127 women's programs across the country, none of which used the three-faceted response to the mature woman's dilemma being used at that time by the Continuum Center: education, employment, and volunteerism. But in 1972, the United States Department of Labor listed in its booklet, "Continuing Education and Services for Women," 376 programs, many of which were similar to the Continuum Center's program.

As a pilot program holding invitational demonstration conferences and receiving some nationwide publicity, the Continuum Center had probably stimulated some replication of its program.

Certainly it had been a part of the beginnings of a women's movement toward a more constructive use of woman power.

The "mature housewife-mothers" of 1965 were not forgotten by the Continuum Center in 1972. Although many of them were more aware of their opportunities (because of the mass media and the Women's Liberation Movement) and more sure of what they were looking for, they still needed and wanted help in knowing themselves, in communicating with their families, and in making decisions about the next step that would be best for each of them. They still enrolled in the Investigation into Identity course to find that help.

But the Continuum Center had learned to think of "mature housewife-mothers" as persons — human beings among other human beings who had to meet their personal life crises; who had to solve certain developmental tasks in order to go on, with maximum personal well being, to another period in their lives.

The hope of the Continuum Center is "to maintain a financially stable institution that will continue to 'turn people on.' " The Center plans to help women and men of all ages find the excitement of living a full life; to help them use their maximum potential all of their lives. The Center would support them at stress times and offer them relevant continuing education at all times. The Center's Director explains the hope in the following words:

> *Our future planning extends to becoming a center for people, men and women, who have reached a crisis point, or a new developmental task in their lives, be it career choice, coping with living alone, middle age, change in career, pre-retirement, or retirement. We would like to respond to it, to become involved in life planning that would prepare for stress times — not to play 'Ain't it awful?' but to find a new way to contend with problems successfully. Finding a new way to release people to their own problem-solving abilities is often facilitated by further education, but not always through conventional education courses.*
>
> *The first step might be a program that would allow for recognition of a normal developmental task, for acceptance of the fact that the task is normal, and for discovery of alternate ways to behave. When people discover that there are alternatives, they can adopt a more flexible stance to stress and crises — indeed, to the various normal problems of living. At this point, more education of a traditional type might be appropriate. Continuing education should weave in and out of a person's life like a sustaining thread to create a constantly rich, fulfilling life despite the normal vicissitudes that are part of every human experience.*

EPILOGUE

This publication has described the history and evolution of the Continuum Center as an organization devoted to serving the needs of adult women. Throughout its development, one of the most significant aspects of the Continuum Center has been its commitment to change. Even as we write this postscript in the spring of 1973, changes are still being made in the programs offered, the clientele served, the methods of providing services, and the roles of staff members.

The staff of the Continuum Center is committed to forming the Center into an establishment that will eventually respond to persons of all ages at crisis times in their lives. We have found that people in transition need support, followed by an examination of options and finally an action step that may involve further education, training, employment, change of job, or a move.

Programmatic changes in the offing are an increased emphasis on career development including preparation of women for a more active role in management and preparation of men to encourage this activity for women. Also there will be programs aimed at marriage reconstruction as well as training of paraprofessionals to support the helping professions more fully described below.

In reading this publication, you may have gained some understanding of the increasingly important role played by the group leaders in the Continuum Center's service programs. As these carefully selected and trained group leaders have taken on more responsibility for the "front-line counseling," staff members have been able to devote an increasing proportion of their time to training group leaders for in-house programs and for outside groups.

Our basic training model, which now relies heavily on the work of Robert Carkhuff and his associates (*Helping and Human Relations: A Primer for Lay and Professional Helpers,* Vols. 1 and 2, New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston, Inc., 1969) seems to be useful for almost all people who want to increase the effectiveness of their helping skills. In each case the training package, which incorporates both one-to-one and group counseling techniques, is adapted to the needs of the specific population through role playing and introducing problems typical of the population to be served. For example, in training group leaders for the Continuum Center's programs, the staff provides trainees with experience in using exercises and materials designed to help mature women with their self-exploration and life-planning.

Similarly, in training an outside group of probation counselors

to work with juvenile delinquents, some trainees were encouraged to assume the roles of the troubled teenagers they would be counseling, while other trainees attempted to work with them in small group simulations and training some senior citizens to work as counselors for other retirees, attention was given to ways of responding to some major problems of the elderly such as loss of physical vigor and the fear of increased dependency.

We have found that careful selection and pre-service training are necessary but not sufficient to help group leaders function effectively. Accordingly, staff is increasing its emphasis on continuing supervision and in-service training with Continuum Center group leaders and, wherever possible, with outside trainees.

As this brief discussion indicates, the increasing thrust of the Continuum Center is toward developing a larger cadre of paraprofessionals trained to help others maximize their potential. In our view such activities represent the vanguard of preventive mental health work.

Continuum Center Staff
Spring 1973