## THE IMPLICATIONS OF A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A GROUP WORK AGENCY AND A CASE WORK AGENCY

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O-OPERATION between a group work agency and a case work agency is no new development. However, there has grown, within the past few years, a concern regarding the nature of this cooperation. How can it be made more effective? Where does the work of each field begin and where does it end? How much overlapping of function is there and how much should there be? Is there a fundamental difference between the two fields -group work and case work?

Two major approaches are being used to secure information to throw more light on these questions. One is the effort to utilize case work skills and group work skills in the group setting—either by one person (who may be a case worker or a group worker), or two persons, (that is, a case worker and a group worker.) The use of one person implies, of course, that workers are available who have training in and knowledge of skills in both fields. The use of two people implies a mutual understanding of the possibilities in each field and a mutual respect for the skills of each.

The second major approach to the question of group work-case work relationship and the one with which this paper is chiefly concerned, is that of co-operative referral and follow-up procedures from one field to the other.

Improved co-operative planning between the Council Educational Alliance and the Jewish Social Service Bureau is a result of the relationship described in the March 1937 Jewish Social Service Quarterly. A definite procedure between

the two agencies has been established. In referrals from the Jewish Social Service Bureau to the Council Educational Alliance, the case worker confers with the intake staff member at the Council Educational Alliance, where all contacts in relation to this project are centralized through one staff member. A conference is planned for the purpose of determining the nature and extent of the client's need for group work. The case worker then sends a summary to the Council Educational Alliance which includes: (1) face sheet information which covers name, address, family set-up, birthdates, places of birth, religious observances, date of arrival in Cleveland and the United States, employment of client referred and head of family, kind of work, hours per week. and salary; (2) family background including a description of the physical environment and family inter-relationships with special emphasis on the position of the client referred; (3) description of client referred which includes, personality picture, physical condition, school adjustment, work adjustment, group affiliations, hobbies and interests, that is, present leisure time activities; (4) reason for referral; (5) the Jewish Social Service Bureau treatment plan.

Follow-up conferences are held at periodic intervals and may be requested by either agency. A record of these conferences is kept by the group worker and the case worker. The role of the respective workers in the continued treatment of the situation is analyzed and defined. The follow-up conferences are attended

worker, the Jewish Social Service Bureau supervisor, the Council Educational Alliance worker and the Council Educational Alliance supervisor.

Situations referred from the group work agency to the case work agency follow a similar procedure. The group worker and the group work supervisor confer with the intake supervisor of the Jewish Social Service Bureau to refer an individual situation. The group work agency then sends a summary to the case work agency describing the nature of the group work agency's contact with the individual being referred. This summary also includes information regarding the individual's home, school and vocational adjustment if any of this is available. Definite arrangements are made for initial explanation of case work service to the client.

Follow-up conferences are held periodically as long as the situation is active with both agencies. The conferences are similar in nature to those held in situations referred by the Tewish Social Service Bureau to the Council Educational Alliance. The group work agency keeps records on all referral situations.

This relationship calls for an awareness and understanding of the services, skills, techniques and problems of one field by the other. The case worker must be aware of the delicacy of group relationships and the difficulties inherent in introducing an individual into a group; of what individuals can get from group participation, and the importance of ability to function in a group; that there are differences in different kinds of groups, and what each kind of group has to offer; that all individuals may not be ready for group experience; of the limitations as to professional staff and "case count" per

by the Jewish Social Service Bureau trained worker; that most groups have volunteer leaders; that staff limitations prevent adequate record keeping; that there are pressures for the development of skills and attendance; of what facilities are available at the group work agency, and a host of other points regarding which there is an increasing knowledge as a result of closer co-operation between the two agencies.

The group worker must acquire some knowledge of recent developments in the case work field, particularly in understanding the meaning of behavior as symptomatic and the importance of early personality developments; what services a case work agency has to offer; must recognize that a case work agency is not able to solve the problems of all the difficult individuals in the group work agency: must be aware that a desire on the part of the individual to use the case work services is essential; and must know that preparation for the use of case work services is important, among other facts.

Through the give and take of conferences on individual situations, both case worker and group worker are acquiring more knowledge, insight and understanding of each other's functions and how the two can work together to the advantage of the client and the community. Recognition of the importance of personality adjustment and group participation and their inter-relationship is fundamental in a program of this kind. This growth in understanding and co-operation is being facilitated by the fact that case workers of the Tewish Social Service Bureau are becoming volunteer group leaders at the Council Educational Alliance; staff members of the Council Educational Alliance are serving on case committees at the Jewish Social Service Bureau; joint staff meetings of a social and educational nature have been arranged, and a joint committee of staff members of both agencies has been meeting. There are many implications here for curriculum planning in schools of social work.

From a brief survey of cases referred through the agreed procedure, there seem to be several general reasons for referral from the case work agency to the group work agency: 1. People live in groups and group work agencies provide opportunities for controlled or semi-controlled group experiences; 2. Escape from and compensation for bad home situation; 3. Escape from and compensation for bad neighborhood; 4. Opportunity for establishing relationships with other individuals; 5. Opportunity for working through problems of personality integration in a controlled environment; 6. Development of skills for vocational or avocational purposes.

The above are not listed in order of importance or frequency since not enough material is available to indicate this. In addition, any combination of the above may be the reason for referral. They may not exist as separate entities, but are listed in this manner for convenience sake.

The group work agency refers individuals to the case work agency on the basis of those services which the case work agency has to offer. The individuals referred may be classified into two major groupings: 1. Individuals who cannot function acceptably in a group work agency and whose poor adjustment in the group indicates a need for case work service; 2. Individuals who can function in a group but who ask for personal assistance with personality difficulties, economic adjustment, vocational adjustment service, problems of family inter-relationships, home economics service, health problems, and other services of the case

working agency.

The following is a situation which indicates the possibilities inherent in a close working relationship between a group work agency and a case work agency:

In 1936, Mrs. Smith came to the Iewish Social Service Bureau and asked for help in relation to her fifteen year old boy, Jack. He was a serious problem in the home. He argued and fought continuously with other members of the family. In the spring, he had been asked to leave school because he was too old for the elementary grades and he was not smart enough to go to Junior High School.

Mr. Smith had tried to give him some work in the small store which the family owned. However, Jack could not be trusted to wait on customers, and after he had made numerous mistakes. Mr. Smith had given up in disgust and insisted that Jack could not work in the store any longer. In addition, Jack had an allergic condition which made it inadvisable for him to be in this particular kind of store.

Further contact in the situation revealed that Mrs. Smith's original story was a real picture of the situation. Family unity and harmony were definitely threatened by the presence and behavior of this fifteen vear old boy.

Contacts with the school indicated that Tack was feebleminded and might be considered for probation to an institution for the feebleminded. Mrs. Smith vacillated greatly in her plans for Jack. At times she wanted to probate him, and other times she would be extremely anxious to keep him in the home. In general, her desires to keep Jack in the home seemed to be the stronger of her ambivalent feelings. If only some outlet could be secured outside of the home where lack could spend some of his time. If only Jack could get work, if this were possible

with his limited abilities.

The case worker recognized that Jack's limited intelligence would make any adinstment in a group work agency extremely difficult. However, the case worker decided to discuss the situation with the Council Educational Alliance and subsequently arranged a conference with the group worker designated to centralize intake in the referral procedure established between the two agencies.

As a result of the initial and follow-up conferences, "made work" was arranged for Jack at the Council Educational Alliance. Mrs. Smith offered to pay for the work program. It was recognized that this was an experimental procedure. There was little indication as to possibilities of any success in helping Jack work through a satisfactory adjustment in the Council Educational Alliance. It was also recognized that Tack's activities in the Council Educational Alliance must be limited, at the outset, to those groups where some paid staff member would be able to asterpretation of Jack's problems to the evidence. staff members would be made by the "intake secretary."

Jack became locker room assistant in the gym. He evidenced an ability to do simple routine work and responded favorably to recognition and approval from the gym instructor, who participated in the conferences regarding the boy. This instructor discusses the situation regularly with the staff member in charge of the referral procedure, and joint conferences are held at intervals with the Jewish Social Service Bureau worker.

In addition, Jack has been introduced to a hobby group and has become one of the best "glider" builders in the Council Educational Alliance. His work is slow but thorough. "He has the patience of

a saint," according to the leader of this group. Jack also frequents the game room and has developed some skill in ping-

These activities have given Jack a certain status with other boys his age. His work in the locker room has given him increased importance, for even though his work is largely menial, it gives him a certain authority which enhances his position with his age group.

Recently he was asked by a group of boys his own age to join a social group. After discussing this with the gym instructor for whom he "works," he decided that as a staff member, he could not join a group of this kind. In view of his definite mental limitations, it was felt that he could not compete successfully in a group of this kind and would, as a result, soon be asked to leave the group and lose the status and satisfactions coming from his present acceptance by the other boys. Jack's behavior in the home has improved remarkably. His earsume responsibility for supervision. In- lier aggressive behavior is no longer in

> Limitations as to professional staff and paid staff of the group work agency in comparison to the size of membership necessarily restrict the number of such situations which could be handled in a group work agency. We must also bear in mind the fact that most direct work with groups and members is done by volunteers with little or no professional preparation or equipment for the job. A situation such as this one also raises the question as to the emphasis of work in a group work agency today. Should the group work agency concern itself with individual problems such as the one described above where potentialities are limited, or should it concern itself solely with the problems of developing a leadership

group by working with individuals whose potentialities for adjustment are greater?

A different type of referral situation is the following:

Mrs. Roberts is a neurotic mother who has no understanding of her children's behavior and needs. She uses the case worker of the Tewish Social Service Bureau to secure emotional release by complaining regarding her various difficul- became a member of a social group. ties to an accepting individual.

One of her particular concerns is Nathan, seventeen years old, whom she rejects, in part, due to identification with her husband who is a deserter. She continuously complains of his bad behavior and lack of interest in earning money to -help support the home.

The effect of these constant complaints. which the case worker found to be without actual factual basis, was to make of Nathan a rather shy boy with little confidence in himself or in his relationships with others.

The case worker discussed leisure time activities with Nathan, and, incidentally, referred to the Council Educational Alliance. Nathan was interested but reluctant to attend. He was not sure that he would like it. He was having "fun" with the boys in the neighborhood. The case worker recognized Nathan's remarks as evidences of underlying feelings of insecurity regarding his acceptance at the Council Educational Alliance and his ability to make a successful adjustment there.

The initial contacts at the Council Educational Alliance were made easy for Nathan by contact with the staff member who recognized Nathan's shyness and uncertainty, and helped him find a place in an interest group where the competition was not so keen as in a social group. Previous vocational tests at the Jewish Social Service Bureau had revealed an out-

standing mechanical ability, and Nathan was referred to an airplane construction group where this ability would be used to the best advantage. As a result of acceptance by the group worker, and successful adjustment in the interest group, Nathan has been able to take a more active part in other activities of the Council Educational Alliance, and some time ago, also

Referrals of this nature indicate a long step forward from the old method of sending a boy of this type to the group work agency with a card of introduction. A mutual discussion of the individual, his special needs for group activity, the manner in which the group work agency could help in the initiation of this, unquestionably enabled this boy to make the most of his group experience.

In brief summary, the referral and follow-up procedure developed between the Council Educational Alliance and the Jewish Social Service Bureau, gives no final answers regarding the relationship between the two fields. It indicates the need for further exploration along those lines between larger numbers of agencies. It points to the need for revised curriculum in schools for social work both for the case worker and the group worker. It raises the question of the possibility of combining the two services of each field in one administrative unit and the corrollary possibility of training individuals equipped to supply both services, with the resulting implications for that phantom generic social work. However, the established procedure has been helpful to both organizations, to the clients of both, and in the development of better integrated service to the community. There can be no question regarding the value of close co-operation between group work and case work agencies.

## A Community Program for Jewish Education and Recreation

## JEWISH EDUCATION IN A COMMUNITY PROGRAM

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WE AMERICAN Jewish educators, when we think of the wide gulf existing between the end products of our labors and what we had hoped to produce, sometimes tend to become discouraged; but when we compare the contemporary Jewish educational scene with what we found when we embarked upon our adventure about a quarter-century ago, we become more optimistic about our future.

We may mark three stages in the progress of Jewish education: 1. Making Tewish education more attractive. 2. Making Jewish education more pertinent. 3. Making Jewish education more dynamic. Inasmuch as it is not the main purpose of this paper to describe this progress, each stage will be outlined very briefly.

There can be no question that we have made a marked improvement in regard to the physical conditions of our school buildings and classrooms. We no longer carry on our educational work in dark and unpleasant rooms; basement classrooms and vestry rooms have been replaced by specially built school buildings which make adequate provision for air, light and sunshine. For the most part, these rooms are decorated and furnished attractively. There is still, unfortunately, need for much further progress along these lines. We still have school buildings which do not meet the accepted standards of safety and hygiene, to say nothing of pleasantness of surroundings.

Jewish education has been made more attractive through various ways and means. The old type melamed has been replaced by trained teachers who understand their pupils and have a sympathetic interest in them. The new textbooks are printed on good paper, with readable type, are illustrated with interesting pictures, and by and large are written in language and style calculated to appeal to the children of the age-group for which they are intended. Moreover, the curriculum has been modified with an eye to making Jewish education more palatable. The most important change along this line has been the introduction of music and arteraft. Extra-curricular activities were introduced for the same reason and with the same motivation. Similarly, improvement in method and educational technique came about as a result of the attempt to present material in as pleasing a way as possible. In short, progress in Jewish education during this stage can be measured by the degree to which Tewish education was made more attractive.

During the first stage, progress and improvement in Tewish education were largely external. The aims, purposes and scope of Jewish education were in the main taken for granted. The problem upon which Tewish educators concentrated was how to carry on this process of education under most favorable conditions. With the recognition that there existed a discrepancy between the needs of