

separation between the generations. Neugarten writes:

So long as we believe that old people are poor, isolated, sick and unhappy (or, to the contrary, powerful, rigid and reactionary) we find the prospect of old age particularly unattractive. We can then separate ourselves comfortably from older persons and relegate them to inferior status.¹⁸

Student reminiscences of grandparents help them to see the differentiation and uniqueness of many older people and how the differentiation continues throughout the life cycle.

Recollections about grandparents help to remind the student that the

¹⁸Bernice Neugarten, "Grow Old Along with Me! The Best is Yet to Be", *Psychology Today*, December 1971, p. 46.

aged he wishes to help continue to be his teachers. For the young, the prospect of their own aging and death are remote and frightening contingencies and they defer thinking about or studying these painful subjects as long as possible. Through guided reminiscence about significant aged persons in his past the student can be brought into creative contact with his own aging. He can learn to care for the aged, not because they are a special group who need protection and isolation, but because he cares for people of all ages and expects that through the disciplined use of self, he can bring his clients of every age, not just the enhancement of their current social functioning, but also realistic hope for the future.

The Impact of Changing Lifestyles on a Family Service Agency*

SOPHIE HARRIS

Senior Caseworker, Jewish Family and Community Service, Chicago, Illinois

"What will destroy us is not change, but our inability to change—both as individuals and as a social system. It is only by welcoming innovation, experiment, and change that a society based on man's capacity to love man can come into being".

IN RECENT years the Jewish Family and Community Service of Chicago became aware through the client—our best source of learning and education—that we needed to reexamine our current practice. We found that our professional skills were not always used as effectively with cases involving new life styles. In examining the problem of the worker, it became evident that our own values interfered with use of our treatment skills. An increasing percentage of our intake requests centered around problems emerging in the framework of non-traditional family life styles. We wondered whether we would see still more such cases if we resolved our own value conflicts, which would make us more available to these clients.

For example, a few years ago we did not see homosexual couples, clients in group marriages and young unmarried couples living together, nor did we get such telephone intake calls as a 19-year-old, Jewish, middle-class, unmarried woman requesting counselling because she never had achieved orgasm. The impact on the worker of such requests sharply brought to the attention of administration that staff was ready to examine the new types of client requests and to find ways to acquire the skills to meet the requests. It became clear that to be effective in broadening our skills we needed to

explore workers' values and biases related to the clients' new social patterns. We also needed to integrate changing values with Jewish values. To help meet staff's needs, a seminar was set up to look at various aspects of changing social patterns in our Jewish community. Our seminar explored three areas:

1. Effect on practice of changing social patterns
2. Workers' values regarding variant life styles
3. Agency's need and readiness to change its image in the Jewish community

The seminar was tremendously helpful in highlighting and delineating some of the problems and dilemmas we face in serving increasing numbers of clients involved in new modes of living. This article deals with many of the questions and dilemmas we face in our practice today. We are fully aware that we do not have the answers and do not presume to offer any here. We do hope, however, to pose significant questions for consideration because we all need to put our minds to these issues and come to terms with them.

Inasmuch as we are a family agency and for the past several years our focus has been on family treatment, we started in the seminar to look at today's family. In the not too distant past we used the "intact" family in staff training. Now we needed to explore such categories as divorce and the

* Presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service, Grossinger, New York, June 9, 1975.

meaning it holds today, group marriage, unmarried couples living together, the homosexual couple. These situations evoked a wide range of feelings in the worker. Our task was first to be aware that we have such feelings and then we needed to find ways to deal with the feelings. We eagerly tried to tell ourselves that as trained, disciplined caseworkers we do not have biases and certainly we would not permit our value judgments to interfere in our practice. We found ourselves reminding one another not to call any behavior "deviant" but to call it "variant".

Whatever our values may be, we had to accept that our families are confronted with rapidly changing societal values and are questioning their choice of traditional marital roles. Roles of individuals within the family that have been clearly defined and accepted have increasingly in the 1970's been questioned. Traditional notions about the family and sex roles no longer can be depended upon for stability. It is, for example, no longer possible to define the family as a unit in which the father works outside of the home to provide financial support and the mother works within the home, primarily to be a helpmate to her husband and to provide emotional support for her children.¹ The Women's Liberation Movement has served as an added inspiration to the changing roles.

An Illustrative Case

The following case presentation, used in our seminar, illustrates casework treatment with a family questioning the traditional life style. In looking at this case, we found that we necessarily had to look at the worker's

¹Joy D. Osofsky and Howard J. Osofsky, "Androgyny As a Life Style," *What is Happening to American Women*, Southern Newspaper Publishers Association, (1970).

value conflicts and how it might have influenced the treatment.

This couple had been married 17 years and had five children living in the home. They described their marriage as having been a close, satisfying one in which the wife joined in many of her husband's community activities. With the children growing up, she no longer felt fulfilled with her role of wife and mother but wanted more "growth" for herself. She decided to complete her education, interrupted by marriage and children, and seek career outlets. She felt justified in taking time from the family because until now she had devoted herself to the growth of her family. Now she felt the need for gratification through individual growth. Initially her husband was able to understand or at least to accept her need. Soon, he became impatient with the consequent lowered housekeeping standards, and additional household and child-care demands made upon him. As the traditional marital roles continued to shift, he withdrew increasingly until communication broke down. At this point, the wife came to the agency. She was ambivalent about her husband's demand for the traditional marital roles. She felt this would interfere with her individual growth and fulfillment and she considered divorce as the only viable solution.

This case illustration provoked many difficult questions. The worker, we felt, was so engrossed in seeing himself as unbiased, accepting of changing life styles, sympathetic to the impact of our changing culture on the role of the woman—that his changing values interfered with more objective diagnostic assessment of the problem. Our exploration of this case pointed up the need to assess both the impact of cultural changes and intrapsychic conflict in our diagnostic evaluation. Were we seeing a life-stage crisis in this woman

whose children were beginning to move out of adolescence and into greater independence, while the husband at the same time was achieving greater success in career and community activities? Was the conflict in the nature of a normal family development in which the wife might have been helped to view her role as wife and mother in a positive light? Could she then have been helped to see potential for her growth within the family? How much did the worker's identification with the woman's focus on societal changes help the client to conclude that only by removing herself from the marriage could she free herself to attain gratification through self-growth? The worker's assessment of the new values seemed to oversimplify the solution for the woman's needs, to the point where he accepted the husband's wish not to be involved in treatment. This ruled out the possibility of treating the husband toward the goal of raising his consciousness with regard to changing roles. Here, we were concerned with the influence of the worker's "reverse" bias.

Another question this case example raised was whether the resultant conflicts following the breakup of a Jewish family are greater because of the central place the family has always occupied in the Jewish tradition. Do we have a special responsibility in our role as caseworker in a Jewish agency? All of us working with Jewish families have long seen the shift away from the tradition of the patriarchal family, where roles of husband, wife, children, and extended family were clearly defined. This tradition no longer seems to fulfill the needs of our contemporary American family. However, I feel it is safe to say that too often the family therapist had neglected to explore the meaning of Jewish identification as a possible source of strength. At this

time, the consciousness of the worker has been raised so that we are more readily able to recognize Jewishness as a significant component in the client's identity.

A corollary problem to the increasing divorce rate is the increase in the single-parent families, which in some instances results in the father raising the children. Although the one-parent family is a significant category in our caseload, it is not included in this paper, both because of the limitation of time and the relative popularity of this topic in the current literature.

Group Marriage

In further question of the availability of our Jewish family agency to clients involved with variant life styles, we decided to explore a group-marriage case. Despite the limited number of such cases in our present caseload, review of the literature revealed greater prevalence of this new life style than had been immediately apparent. The concept of group marriage was new to us and we first attempted to define it by turning to the literature. In Constantine's² definition, "Multilateral marriage is defined as one in which three or more people each considers himself to have a primary relationship with at least two other individuals in the group". In a group marriage each of the three or more participants is pair-bonded with at least two others. "Group marriage may involve a couple and a single, two couples, two couples and a single, three couples, or three couples and a single". As far as is known to the author, no group marriage consisting of more than seven individuals has been veri-

²Larry L. Constantine and Joan M. Constantine, "Dissolution of a Marriage in a Nonconventional Context," *Non-Traditional Family Forms in the 1970's*, National Council on Family Relations, 1972.

fied as existing, and the likelihood that such a group might exist is doubtful. The addition of one individual greatly increases the number of possible pair-bonds on the group. In a triad, each individual has twice as many pair-bonds as in a dyad. Six pair-bonds are possible in a group of four people, ten are possible in a group of five, fifteen are possible in a group of six, and 21 pair-bonds are possible in a group of seven people. As I continued with Constantine's definition, I recognized my own values as I felt relieved to read further and find that "Triads and two-couple group marriages are the most popular types".

Albert Ellis in his article, "Group Marriage: A Possible Alternative?"³ explores the advantages and disadvantages. He believes that "it is likely that some individuals will always favor some kind of group marriage, especially in theory, and that some will even find it good in actuality. . . it seems very doubtful, however, that a great many people will rush into group marriages in the near future".

The number of authors who have devoted their attention to the subject of group marriage indicates the extent to which the traditional form of marriage is under question, but I do not know that we would go so far as Lederer and Jackson who affirm that "the state of marriage is a calamity". Nor do we yet subscribe to the implications of the title of David Cooper's new book, *The Death of the Family*. As we explored our caseloads, we found that many of us had had some contact, usually brief, with cases involved in some form of group marriage. The following is a case illustration of a ménage à trois, of a

³Albert Ellis, "Group Marriage: A Possible Alternative?" *The Family in Search of a Future: Alternate Models for Moderns*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, (1972).

Jewish, upper, middle-class family in an affluent suburb, treated in our agency.

Mrs. M. came to the Jewish Family & Community Service at the point that she felt that she needed to make some decisions for herself when the ménage à trois of the past 2½ years was dissolving. When the marriage of about six years was no longer gratifying, the couple had agreed to try to resolve the marital conflicts by bringing another woman into the home, who became a sexual partner to both the husband and the wife. Mrs. M. was getting pressure from her husband to choose between him and the woman added to the ménage. The relationship gradually had strengthened between the two women who largely excluded the husband as a sexual partner. Mrs. M. questioned whether she was a lesbian and could find gratification only in such a relationship. In her ambivalence about her two love-partners she leaned toward leaving her husband and maintaining the household with her two children, ages four and six, and the other woman. (I find our vocabulary lacking in labels for such roles). We speculated on the intrapsychic conflicts of individuals who choose a group marriage to meet their needs. We questioned whether Mrs. M. was really a lesbian or was searching for fulfillment she had not found in a heterosexual relationship. In treatment Mrs. M. began to understand that her lack of fulfillment came more from the lacks within herself than from her relationship. Mrs. M. continued to struggle to discover which type of "marital relationship" would bring greatest fulfillment.

Discussion of this case brought into awareness the many value conflicts of the worker. Workers preferred to feel that they could remain free of value judgments and be effective in helping Mrs. M. find a solution. However, this was not handled easily by therapists whose primary orientation is to family treatment. If we help Mrs. M., the only client requesting services, with her quest for individual fulfillment, what are the consequences for husband and children and for the woman brought into the marriage? Some workers felt that our treatment approach should

have included all members of the household. Would we then treat them as a family including the adult triad and the children? Another troublesome question was the transference issue. How open should a worker be about her own values? This worker felt that marriage, in part, involved a symbiosis and this demands only two people in the relationship. She was able to reveal to the client, without depreciating her, that she (the worker) had a bias and found it difficult to accept group marriage. Another very troublesome question was around the effects on the children of both the group marriage and the breakup of such marriage. The children were exposed to seeing both women come out of their father's bedroom on different mornings. We felt that at this young age the children probably used the usual denial of what goes on in the parental bedroom. However, we all were uncomfortable with this type of case. This made us question to what extent our unreadiness to deal with such situations accounts for the limited number of such cases seen in our agency. We became interested in the benefits of group marriage and found the following to be the philosophy of some of the authors:

- Promotes personality development and self-actualization through intimate interaction with more than one type of person.
- Provides sexual variety without sacrificing depth of relationship and continuity, or requiring secrecy.
- Promotes sexual and social equality between the sexes.
- Provides for broader role sharing, a broader economic base, and security of multiple love relationships.
- Provides children with multiple (hence less rigid) role models and multiple emotional resources while lessening child-rearing responsibility of any one parent.

Our practitioners found the variety of ideas about group marriage thought-provoking but we were not at all sure that each "benefit" did not carry with it a correlated problem or problems. We were particularly concerned about the long-term effects on children, an area frequently glossed over by the advocates of group marriage.

Again, we became aware of our compounded confusions in integrating the group marriage life style with the traditional importance of the intact family to Jewish life. Group marriage may not be the answer to the breakdown of the traditional marriage. However, society is searching for new types of marriages, which is reflected in the rapid rate in which the traditional form of marriage, including the Jewish marriage, ends in divorce

High Divorce Rates

Although marriage has increased in popularity—10.7 marriages per 1000 individuals in 1970, the highest annual rate since 1950—so has the number of individuals who have chosen to terminate their marriage contract. In 1970, there were 715,000 divorces and annulments in the United States, which is almost double the number in 1950 (385,000). Since 1967, the divorce rate has increased by 30 percent. David Olson quotes from *Vital Statistics*, Vol. 19, 1971.⁴ This rate represents one divorce for every four marriages. The rate of divorce among those married under 18 is close to 50 percent. The ratio of divorced individuals compared to those married has increased in the ten-year period from 1960 to 1970. In 1960 there were 28 divorced men for every 1000 men married, compared to 35 for every 1000 in 1970. Comparable figures for females were 42 divorced

⁴David H. Olson, "Marriage of the Future: Revolutionary or Evolutionary Change?" *Non-Traditional Family Forms in the 1970's*, op. cit.

for every 1000 married in 1960 and 60 for every 1000 in 1970. The average length of marriage has declined to an average of 7.1 years. It would be interesting to have statistics on the percentage of divorced people who choose a variant life style for their next relationship, rather than another traditional marriage.

Cohabitative Relationships

A life style that in recent years has become incorporated in our thinking as almost traditional is the young couple living together without benefit of marriage. With this category, we found in our seminar that there was not the same strong need to explore workers' values as with other non-traditional styles. In fact, a few of the workers were themselves involved in this life style. Review of our cases revealed that unmarried couples came for counseling with many of the same problems that brought married couples: conflicts about intimacy, role identity, financial budgeting, relationship with parents and "in-laws", including the problem of which set of parents to spend major holidays with, division of responsibilities. The level of commitment varied—not unlike that of married couples. Our caseload of unmarried couples living together frequently included those who had not previously been married, but often one or both had been married and divorced or the divorce was forthcoming. With couples previously married we found they had the wish to secure the present relationship and avoid the pitfalls of the broken marriage—again much as the effort put forth by couples pursuing their second marriage. In our somewhat cursory survey of couples living together we found that the woman usually was concerned that the relationship should be a lasting one but not necessarily one leading to marriage. These superficial findings vary from

that of Lyness and Lipetz of the University of Colorado who found that "The living-together women appeared to desire security in marriage, whereas the men indicated that the arrangement was more likely to be an alternative to marriage".⁵ To what extent the life-style of living together will effect the future rate of marriage is of interest to all of us. Carl Rogers says . . . "the trend toward greater freedom in sexual relationships, in adolescents and adults, is likely to continue, whether this direction frightens us or not . . . Sexual activity is seen as a potentially joyful and enriching part of a relationship. The attitude of possessiveness—of owning another person—which historically has dominated sexual unions—is likely to be greatly diminished".⁶

Rogers feels that it is becoming increasingly clear that a man-woman relationship will have "permanence" only to the degree to which it satisfies the emotional, psychological, intellectual, and physical needs of the partners. This means that the "permanent" marriage of the future will be even better than marriage in the present, because the ideals and goals for that marriage will be of a higher order. The partners will be demanding more of the relationship than they do today. In contrast to his optimistic view of the marriage of the future, Rogers describes marriage today as "a failing portion of our culture". I could not help feeling encouraged, however, about the potential of the marriage of the future when I turned to his dedication of the book, which reads: "To Helen—a per-

⁵Judith L. Lyness and Milton E. Lipetz, "Living Together: An Alternative to Marriage," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, Vol. XXXIV, (May, 1972).

⁶Carl R. Rogers, *Becoming Partners: Marriage and Its Alternatives*. LaJolla, California: Center for Studies of the Person, (1972).

son in her own right—giving, loving, stalwart; my companion in our separate but intertwined pathways of growth; an enricher of my life; the woman I love; and—fortunately for me—my wife".

Homosexual Relationships

Another category which seminar members felt the need for the agency to grapple with was homosexuality. Although such clients constituted a small percentage of our caseload, the incidence was increasing. We looked at a case of two men, 23 and 32 years of age living in a homosexual relationship. The worker had seen them for a period of three years, until she left the agency. Interviews were both joint with the couple and individual with each, as indicated. The caseworker's approach was much the same as for a traditional married couple. The younger man from time to time deserted and the older one panicked, became depressed, unable to sleep, work or function generally. The worker felt that her role was to hold this relationship together because it seemed that both needed to "grow" within it. The 23-year old had already tried the traditional marriage, was divorced and had a young son. He felt ungratified in the marriage and now felt that he could best meet his needs in a homosexual "marriage".

Again, the value conflicts of the workers emerged in reviewing this case. We needed to be aware of how our biases, judgments, feelings affected our practice. We were struck with the comfort of the worker in treating this couple and her acceptance of their variant life style. We launched into discussion of whether we should, indeed, view homosexuality as a life style or as a symptom. If viewed as a symptom, the treatment necessarily would vary. We were reminded that the American Psychiatric Association recently re-

moved homosexuality from their diagnostic categories and now accept it as a way of life. (It is interesting to note that the APA changed their views following a meeting, during a national conference, which was interrupted by extensive demonstrations by a group of homosexuals). As therapists viewing homosexuality as a way of life, many issues were raised. What does this do to procreation? How are social roles determined for the individuals? Do the roles need to be delineated? What does it do to children raised with only one sexual identity?

Barry Dank explains,⁷ "If the homosexuality-as-way-of-life viewpoint is increasingly disseminated, one would anticipate that the problem associated with accepting a homosexual identity will significantly decrease, there will be a higher proportion of homosexually oriented people with a homosexual identity, and this identity will develop at an earlier age" . . . The greater circulation of the homosexuality-as-way-of-life viewpoint may lead to, and possibly is leading to, the creation of a gay community in which one's sex life is becoming increasingly less fragmented from the rest of one's social life".

Inasmuch as the homosexuality-as-way-of-life viewpoint is increasingly accepted we felt that our agency needed to address itself to the needs of our community. Again, we asked ourselves whether we see a limited number of such cases because of the Jewish tradition and because of our agency image. We invited two speakers to our meetings to compare the experiences of other community institutions in which new life styles were considerably more prevalent than in ours. One speaker was a clinical psychologist for the Uni-

⁷Barry H. Dank, "Coming Out In the Gay World," *Psychiatry*, Vol. XXXIV, (May, 1971).

versity of Chicago Counselling and Psychotherapy Center. Their emphasis differs from that of our agency in that they make a special effort to offer counselling to clients who might not be likely to apply to other agencies. It is known in their largely non-Jewish community, for example, that the Center offers "gay counselling". This counselling is often done by "gay" therapists and might include group therapy for homosexual women or homosexual men. Prospective clients are aware that homosexuality is seen as an acceptable choice and that the agency will not pressure them to change. It was felt that this agency approach accounts, in part, for their relatively large incidence of homosexual cases. Many people come to this Center around their concern about whether to "go gay" or "go straight". Our speaker felt that it was not necessary to see the situation as black or white, but to recognize that most people had a combination of both homosexual and heterosexual feelings, with the heterosexual being predominant in the majority of people. If homosexuality were more accepted in society, she felt, people would not be required to make the decision of whether or not they are gay. In that agency the client is given a choice of therapist and may request a therapist who, himself, is pursuing a non-traditional life style. Even though we now feel that homosexuality should not always be treated as a symptom, our agency continues to question whether or not the client would feel more accepted and more comfortable with a worker himself involved in a similar life style.

Once again we needed to address ourselves to the problem as viewed in the Jewish tradition. We invited, as speaker, a young co-leader of an experimental synagogue in Chicago, on leave of absence from the Hebrew Un-

ion College in Cincinnati. He had helped to found the Makom Synagogue whose primary objective was to serve alienated young Jews. With regard to attitudes on homosexuality, our speaker cited Leviticus as prohibiting it—"man shall not lie with man nor woman with woman." Also the emphasis on procreation implies exclusion of this type of sexual behavior. However, this area seems open for reevaluation in this new synagogue. He stated that with the emerging life styles in their community, the gay community is expanding. They plan to reach out to offer counselling to the gay community because it is a life style ordinarily condemned by the traditional Jewish community. They feel that this is one way in which they offer the alienated Jew a place within an organized religious community. Here, too, the issue of Jewish survival must be considered in our struggle to integrate the new life styles into our personal and professional value systems.

The feeling of responsibility to reach out to the gay community is also seen within the National Association of Social Workers, whose chapter in San Francisco adopted a position paper in February, 1972. On the basis of this paper, the 1973 Delegates Assembly presented a resolution charging the National Board to adopt a policy paper on homosexuality for presentation to the 1975 Delegate Assembly. The policy statement cites widespread incidence of homosexuality. It refers to the Kinsey data of 1948 which showed that only about one-half of the adult population in the United States is exclusively heterosexual in behavior. More conservative estimates indicate that in some urban centers the gay community claims from 10 to 15 percent of the adult population. "Members of this minority group can be found in all walks of life, at all socio-economic lev-

els, among all cultural groups within American society".

The Code of Ethics adopted by the Delegate Assembly of NASW further states: "The primary obligation of members of NASW is to the welfare of the individual or group served, which includes action for improving social conditions. This means that social workers have the responsibility of ascertaining the needs and promoting the well-being of homosexually oriented people. As a human service profession, social work must accept special responsibility for serving a disadvantaged sector of American society. Clients of social workers are in the ranks of this minority group".⁸ Homosexuality now appears to be a way of life with which we must prepare to deal in a family context.

Summary and Conclusions

At this time we have all had sufficient exposure through agency practice, the literature, and our own social environment to know that influences will continue toward changing the structure of the traditional family. Studies of the family reveal widespread agreement that the family today is not working out too well.

David Olson⁹ predicts that young people will experiment in forms of marriage and feels that the marriage relationship of the future will be different from what it is today, but the change will occur because of evolutionary rather than revolutionary processes. One form that the future family might take is that studied by Berger and Hackett in California and the Southwest—the communal family, of which we have seen little in our agen-

cy. The emerging life styles of live-in couples, homosexual relationships, group marriage, and the increase in divorce, have been and will continue to be both responsible to societal change and a cause of change. According to Olson, the marriage institution is an emotional thermometer of contemporary society and also an indicator of future trends. The fact that there are beginnings of a female revolution is already, and will continue to be, reflected both in marriage and society. Some may feel that these attempts at change are the cause of society's problems, but these behaviors might more appropriately be seen as a solution to problems in marriage and also in society.

Our task now is not only to cope with the added pressures of the traditional family, but to broaden our skills to serve those involved in the emerging life styles. As a family agency, serving the needs of contemporary society, we may have unanswered, weighty issues with which we continue to struggle. We have explicitly seen in our practice that the traditional marriage and family has and will continue to undergo change. If the emphasis continues on growth of the individual, through whatever type of relationship this might take place, what are the implications for treatment? Is our emphasis likely to shift from family-treatment focus to treatment of the individual? A statistical survey of interviews in our agency gave the following percentages: In 1970 multiple interviews of 3 or more persons accounted for 18.1% of the total number of interviews.

In 1972 there was a decrease to 17.5%.

In 1974—3 or more person interviews dropped to 11.8%.

Paralleling these figures, joint

⁸National Association of Social Workers, Inc., Golden Gate Chapter, publ by Society for Individual Rights, 83 Sixth Street, San Francisco, 94103, (April, 1973).

⁹David H. Olson, op. cit.

interviews dropped from 27.3% to 25.0% and to 14.7% in 1974.

Individual interviews increased from 51% in 1970 to 59.1% in 1974.

These statistics have particular significance to us. Will we be able to reconcile our responsibility to serve the client in new family forms with our commitment to Jewish survival, in which we have looked to the traditional family as the influential vehicle?

Another issue we need to grapple with is the contemporary thinking that a variety of relationships is helpful to individual growth. How does this affect our long-held theory that growth for children flourishes only in a permanent relationship—in a marriage—with one mother and one father?

Another issue to which we need to address ourselves is the possibility that the matching of client and therapist living similar life styles is beneficial. If so, what are the implications for the hiring of staff? How ready are we, as a traditional family agency, to change our self-image? If we expand our ser-

vices to clients involved in new life styles, do we, thereby, limit our availability to clients living the traditional life style? For example, we wondered whether or not our brochure which describes the services of our agency should in the future include a section on "gay counselling" and the effect this might have on prospective clients living traditional life styles.

Whatever dilemmas we face and whatever form the change we all witness in our practice might evolve into, we cannot be afraid of change or afraid to challenge ideas and traditions, no matter how sacred. As Herbert Otto stated,¹⁰ "What will destroy us is not change, but our inability to change—both as individuals and as a social system. It is only by welcoming innovation, experiment, and change that a society based on man's capacity to love man can come into being".

¹⁰Herbert A. Otto, *The Family in Search of a Future*. New York: Appleton, Century, and Crofts, 1970.

Integration of Jewish Commitment into the Treatment Process*

SAUL HOFSTEIN, D.S.W.

Consultant in Social Planning, Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York

"In a sense, the Jewish caseworker representing the Jewish agency has the responsibility for individualizing the religious, social, ethical and communal aspects of Jewish identity, of bringing its richness to the individual and using it in the treatment processes to buttress and help that individual in his adversity. In enabling the individual thus to value his Jewish identity and to use it for his own growth and development, the Jewish social worker opens the possibility for each client to add from his own experience to the collective strength of Judaism and its continuity."

The Distinctiveness of the Jewish Casework Agency

THERE is a growing recognition that the Jewish agency serving families, children and the aged must carry a role in the Jewish community different from that of the non-sectarian agency. It shares the responsibility with the non-sectarian agency for alleviating individual and family disturbance and breakdown and providing assistance at periods of crisis. As a Jewish agency it carries additional responsibilities which include:

- 1) Sustaining and embodying the Jewish traditions of the centrality of the family, the essential worth of every individual, zedakah (charity and justice) and chesed (loving-kindness).
- 2) Enriching Jewish life through the enhancement of the individual's and family's ability to live affirmatively as Jews by contributing in some degree to Jewish life.

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The term "casework agency" is used here broadly to define those agencies which offer tangible services, counseling and psychological treatment primarily through the use of a relationship with a professional caseworker or other clinical personnel. They include child care, family and health-related services.

- 3) Exploring the means for strengthening and furthering creative Jewish continuity and identity.
- 4) Contributing as a Jewish agency to the broad American community's ability to cope with poverty, dysfunction and alienation.

Beyond its special functions, the Jewish agency is unique in that it is preferred by Jewish clients, serves predominantly Jewish families and individuals, is administered by primarily Jewish boards and administrators, is staffed to a major degree by Jewish caseworkers and derives its essential support from Jewish contributors. Even where a substantial portion of the funding may come from public or United Way funds, essentially that money represents the Jewish community's share of the total funds made available for the purpose of meeting individual needs for the entire population. The Jewish family agency has persisted because of the continuing conviction that the Jewish individual and family can best be served by an agency which operates under the auspices of the Jewish community and is particularly sensitive to the meaning of being Jewish in a non-Jewish world.

Much thought and a body of literature has developed providing the rationale for the continuing importance of the Jewish family agency and its