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**ADDRESSING COMMUNITY AWARENESS
OF SELF-HELP GROUPS**

by

David Glenn Anderson

**A Project Report
Submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate College
in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Specialist in Education
Department of Educational Leadership**

**Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
April, 1981**

ADDRESSING COMMUNITY AWARENESS
OF SELF-HELP GROUPS

David Glenn Anderson, Ed.S.

Western Michigan University, 1981

A directory of self-help organizations in Vermilion County, Illinois, was developed as a project to complete the requirements of the Specialist in Education degree through the Department of Educational Leadership at Western Michigan University. The intern's training placement was with the Vermilion County Community 708 Mental Health Board, a mental health funding agency.

It was determined that the majority of self-help groups in Vermilion County were not listed in any existing directory and that a directory of self-help groups was needed. A self-help group directory was completed and a spring conference co-sponsored by the Vermilion County Council of Social Agencies and the Danville Area Community College was planned with self-help groups as a topic.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There were several people who helped me approach this internship from an appropriate perspective. My advisor Carol Sheffer provided valuable guidance and timely encouragement. Jean Smith, Professor, School of Social Service, St. Louis University, assisted me early in the internship to understand the trends in self-help groups. Anthony Vattane, Associate Professor, School of Social Work, University of Illinois, shared knowledge about self-help groups with me. Michael Balter, my site supervisor, was an excellent model of a community social worker. He consistently stressed the necessity to perform as a professional.

David Glenn Anderson

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Prospectus	5
II. THE INTERNSHIP PROCESS	12
Developing the Plan	14
Identification of Organizations	17
Information Gained During the Identification Process	18
Community Acceptance of the Intern's Project	19
Agency Cooperation	20
III. GENERAL FINDINGS	23
Conceptual	23
Human	25
Technical	27
IV. CONCLUSIONS	30
APPENDICES	32
Appendix A--Internship Log	33
Appendix B--Self-Help Groups Accessible to Vermilion County	59
Appendix C--Announcement from Spring Publication on Council of Social Agencies	61
Appendix D--Statement on National Self-Help Clearinghouse	63
REFERENCES	65
BIBLIOGRAPHY	66

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Specialist in Education degree program through the Department of Educational Leadership at Western Michigan University includes an internship requirement. To meet the requirement, an internship was completed during the period of September 8, 1980 through December 15, 1980 at the Vermilion County Community Mental Health 708 Board, a social service funding agency in Danville, Illinois. For purposes of brevity the agency's name is referred to as "The Mental Health Board," "The 708 Board," and as "The Board" in this report.

Most of the intern's experience had been in agencies that focused on individuals as clients. The intern, a social worker with a master of social work degree, considered a mental health board to be a desirable training experience because of its community focus. Rather than having individuals or groups as clients, this agency had other mental health organizations as service recipients. Workers from mental health agencies could apply to the Mental Health Board for funding. The purpose of the Vermilion County Community Mental Health 708 Board is stated in the Vermilion County Directory of Community Services (1978) to be:

Initiated by House Bill 708, this is a local funding and consulting board operating from local property tax, appointed by the County Board and charged to facilitate the overall impact and co-ordination of Vermilion County Mental Health Services. (p. 80)

It was expected that focusing on the community as a client would be a broadening experience. It was anticipated that aspects of administration, community education and leadership could be amply addressed through an internship at The Mental Health Board.

Michael Balter, a professional social worker and executive director of The 708 Board, was the site supervisor for the internship. He was experienced in working with a board of directors and with the field of community organization. Social workers who work in the field of community organization have the community as a client. They help the community solve problems. In some cases, tasks are limited to helping the community identify problems or address issues.

The Vermilion County Community 708 Mental Health Board, as it functioned during the time of the internship, focused primarily on community needs. Community groups or agencies made requests for funds to the Vermilion County Community 708 Mental Health Board. Requests were considered and decisions were made regarding funding. The board also provided consultation to the community regarding approaches to solve problems.

Prior to receiving approval from The Board for the internship, Michael Balter and the prospective intern discussed community needs and potential areas for attention in an internship. Mr. Balter expressed concern that people in the community did not always know where to go for help for the specific problems. He noted that in Vermilion County as well as in most other communities, there was a problem of bringing the services that people need to them. This

has been a traditional problem in the field of social work.

Another related problem discussed was shortages of services. In many instances people did not receive the services they needed because there were not sufficient services available to them. Some mental health services were more expensive than many people could afford. In Vermilion County, as in the rest of the United States, a self-help movement had developed to help fill the gap. Such well-known organizations as Alcoholics Anonymous, Parents Without Partners, and Recovery, Inc. are self-help organizations. In such organizations people with similar problems help each other by sharing information and giving each other mutual support. Most self-help organizations do not need to have professionals in leadership positions. Shortages of and high costs of such professionals as psychiatrists do not affect the number of people who become members of self-help groups.

When needed, self-help groups can refer to professionals for help. In many instances, people who are being treated by a professional are also being helped in a mutual-help group. Self-help groups are sometimes called mutual-help groups. Some self-help organizations have been started by professionals and others have been led by professionals. When a professional person enters a group he does not automatically assume a leadership position. There are many different ways that a professional, such as a social worker, can be involved in self-help groups. The group continues to be a self-help organization as long as the primary means of treatment, or therapeutic support, is given by other members. The more an

organization is characterized by mutual support and minimal professional leadership, the more purely it is as a self-help organization.

Mr. Balter and the intern were convinced from reviews of existing directories that many self-help organizations were not readily known in Vermilion County. There were directories for social agencies which included some self-help organizations. But there was not a directory specifically to list self-help organizations. It was decided that a project directed towards promoting awareness of mutual-help groups would be a valuable service to the community. Consequently, it was decided that an internship related to the development of a directory of self-help groups would be relevant.

It was anticipated that this internship would give the student an opportunity to observe many aspects of community functioning, and to make evaluations and plans for changes. There would be technical skills related to developing a directory. The managerial skills of planning and organizing would be necessary aspects of this internship. The tasks related to this project seemed to be complex enough for an educational specialist internship.

In this report, Katz and Bender's definition of self-help groups will be used (1976, p. 9).

Self-help groups are voluntary, small group structures for mutual aid and the accomplishment of a special purpose. They are usually formed by peers who have come together for mutual assistance in satisfying a common need, overcoming a common handicap or life-disrupting problem, and bringing about desired social and/or personal change. The initiators and members of such groups perceive that their needs are not, or cannot be, met by or through existing social institutions. Self-help groups emphasize face-to-face social interactions

and the assumption of personal responsibility by members. They often provide material assistance, as well as emotional support; they are frequently "cause" oriented, and promulgate an ideology of values through which members may attain an enhanced sense of personal identity.

Prospectus

The Educational Leadership department requires that an internship prospectus be submitted and approved prior to fulfilling the requirements of the internship. The prospectus for this internship follows.

David G. Anderson

September 10, 1980

INTERNSHIP:

Prospectus

SPONSORING ORGANIZATION:

Vermilion County Mental Health
708 Board

FIELD SUPERVISOR:

Michael H. Balter, Executive
Director

UNIVERSITY ADVISOR:

Carol Sheffer, Western Michigan
University

MAJOR FOCUS OF EXPERIENCE:

Community organization and social
education, develop directory of
self-help groups in Vermilion
County.

DURATION:

Nine weeks, commencing September
23, 1980

RATIONALE:

Some needs that people have can be met by other people who have the same or closely related problems. Even if the problem can not readily be solved, the people can assist each other to cope. Self-help groups are organizations in which members help

each other to either solve or cope with problems. These organizations usually do not have a paid professional on the direct service delivery level. Alcoholics Anonymous and Recovery Incorporated are well known examples of self-help organizations.

These self-help groups do not necessarily compete with professionals. When a person has a minor social problem, he does not need a trained social worker. Some times other people who have experienced the same problem can be very effective. If a problem does not lend itself to a solution sometimes friends can help the individual cope with it. Helping people cope is a task of self-help groups.

People can develop self-help groups when they perceive a need. In some instances where a national organization is in existence, a new chapter in a community can solve a need. If the professionals are not on the direct service level an organization can still be defined as a self-help group.

Knowledge of existing self-help groups can be helpful to consumers and to referral makers. Professionals can and do make referrals to such groups. In some cases self-help groups are part of the follow-up to inpatient treatment, or to outpatient treatment. A person might remain a member of Alcoholics Anonymous (A. A.) for years after he has completed a residential treatment program. Some studies have demonstrated that alcoholics maintain their sobriety longer if they participate in A. A. than if they do not.

In Danville, Illinois, there is a published welfare information guide, which includes primarily professional social welfare agencies.

There is not a published guide for self-help groups.

A directory of self-help groups could meet two main purposes: one, make self-help groups more visible, and two, facilitate appropriate referrals to such groups. An additional benefit would be an increase in credibility of these organizations.

An internship addressing the problem of utilization of self-help groups would have educational and community organizational features. Helping the community become aware of the existence of these organizations and to better understand the purposes of them would be a major task of this internship. This task is both social organizational and educational in nature.

A logical organization for coordination of this internship would be a community mental health organization. The executive director of the Vermilion County Community Mental Health 708 Board, a social service agency, has agreed to ask his board to support this venture and to permit him to supervise the project. The mental health board will be asked to help sponsor the resulting directory of self-help groups.

The development of a directory would require several important tasks. A primary task would be to decide what aspects of self-help groups are needed in the format. Bits of information would include such things as, name of the organization and purpose of the organization. Unexpected findings might suggest expansion of the data.

The development of a scheme to identify self-help organizations will be very important. Reviewing existing publications will

be part of the scheme. Discussions with leaders in the Danville social welfare organizations will be included. The scheme will be tailored to get the most useful information regarding the area under study.

After the data are collected, a directory will be developed and published. The publication might be as a supplement to an existing social welfare information guide, or it might be published in the Commercial News, the principal newspaper in Danville.

Projected Nature of Internship Experience

Objectives	Experiences & Contacts	Terminal Skills
A. Conceptual	The intern will:	The intern will be able to:
1. To <u>review</u> existing documents and literature regarding self-help groups.	develop a <u>search plan</u> to locate existing publications regarding self-help groups. Use library and social work consultation.	<u>display</u> gathered publications and related materials.
2. To <u>analyze</u> the data regarding the structure and content of resource guides.	<u>institute</u> a systematic approach to the study of the data gathered.	<u>identify</u> data, not previously available.
3. To make a series of <u>observations</u> based upon data gathered and on discussions with relevant people.	<u>carry out</u> discussions with leading social welfare agency workers, to determine how they perceive the situation.	<u>relate</u> the gathered data to other reported material.
4. To <u>understand</u> what is needed to produce a comprehensive directory, and to mobilize a community.	<u>coordinate</u> with Vermilion County Mental Health 708 Board. And through the multi-faceted contacts mentioned earlier.	<u>develop</u> an educational aid, a directory, that will be available to a community and useful to it.

Projected Nature of Internship Experience (cont.)

Objectives	Experiences & Contacts	Terminal Skills
B. Human	The intern will:	The intern will be able to:
1. To <u>become familiar</u> with the objectives and areas of interest of various social agencies having direct or potential relationship to self-help groups.	<u>arrange appointments and interviews with representatives of such agencies as:</u> Dept. Children & Family Services Dept. of Public Aid. Vermilion Co. Nursing Service. Salvation Army. Family Education Center.	<u>indicate</u> how professional agencies and self-help organization can better interface each other.
2. To <u>analyze</u> the nature of local self-help organizations from the perspective of key personnel.	<u>collate information</u> available from such agency resources. <u>Make judgments</u> about the usefulness of information, how the information can best be	<u>to produce</u> substantial material regarding the available self-help organizations.
3. To <u>comprehend</u> the nature of the need for self-help groups as seen by leaders of such groups.	<u>discuss</u> the situation with relevant community representatives.	<u>to refer</u> to data which demonstrate what self-help groups do.

Projected Nature of Internship Experience (cont.)

Objectives	Experiences & Contacts	Technical Skills
C. Technical	The intern will:	The intern will be able to:
1. To <u>determine</u> the appropriate community organizational scheme to analyze the self-help group situation and also the potential for professional cooperation.	<u>prepare</u> a community oriented field study plan. A directory of self-help organizations will be developed. Develop a conference on self-help organizations.	<u>present reasons</u> to support the community organizational study and its informative contributions.
2. To <u>develop</u> an increased expertise in the use of and the understanding of such a study.	make <u>observations</u> and <u>judgement</u> regarding the effects of each task tried; e.g., interviews.	<u>demonstrate</u> an increased level of proficiency, breaking a project into tasks and evaluating the effects of each task tried.
3. To <u>discuss</u> the self-help group situation with self-help group leaders and with social service and other community leaders.	bring about a <u>dialogue</u> with and between leaders of self-help organizations.	<u>write</u> a comprehensive guide to self-help organizations. Advise how to integrate found data into existing directories, propose a conference on self-help organizations as a follow up.

CHAPTER II

THE INTERNSHIP PROCESS

The main problem addressed in this internship was that many people in Vermilion County needed services but did not know how to go about getting them. It was believed that some of the people who needed services could be helped by self-help groups. It was thought that if a directory were developed that included a wide range of self-help organizations it could be distributed and used to help resolve the problem of getting people and resources together.

Deciding upon a problem to be addressed and a means to go about doing it was the most crucial part of the internship. During early conferences, Mr. Balter and the intern discussed many problems in the community and evaluated them to determine if they were of an appropriate level of importance for the projected internship, whether they were intellectually challenging, and whether they were in reasonable proportion to the time and resources which would be available to the internship. Other approaches besides developing a directory were considered. The most seriously considered approach was to develop an orientation and inservice training program for social work staffs of local agencies. The directory project was chosen for two primary reasons: first, it would be less threatening to local administrators. Outsiders giving inservice training to such staffs could be considered to be an attempt to usurp authority from the local staff. Second, the intern had been involved in

developing directories of social services at two other times in his career. The past experiences had been rather surface related ones, in that the services to be included had appeared to be rather obvious, and a great deal of evaluation had not gone into what groups to include. The intern wanted an opportunity to use more professional approaches to working on a directory project than he had in the past. Having Mr. Balter's consultation was an important aspect in helping the intern deal with this type of project in a systematic, professional manner.

The format of the directory, the kinds of groups to be included, and approaches to do such things as gathering information for the directory were important considerations. The format of the directory would be developed by evaluating the formats of existing directories and selecting what seemed to be the qualities that would be most suitable for a directory dealing with considerations which would be related to self-help groups.

The intern planned to identify all of the self-help groups available to Vermilion County, and then select for inclusion those groups which seemed suitable for the directory. Decisions would need to be made regarding when to exclude an organization that had many self-help qualities but lacked some, but not all, of the attributes of a self-help group.

The intern gained information about many organizations that were not true self-help organizations. The category of social clubs and fraternal organizations was investigated to determine it would be appropriate to include them in the directory. The community

services assistant to the Mayor provided what seemed to be exhaustive information regarding fraternal organizations for blacks in Danville. Some of these organizations provided services to the community and also had self-help aspects for their members. An unusual club, from the perspective of appearing paradoxical was the Untouchables. It was a motorcycle club primarily for blacks, but which whites could join. It was regarded in the community to be a law abiding organization which did many charitable acts, such as raising money for deprived children.

It was decided that to include social clubs in the directory of self-help organizations would broaden the directory to such an extent that it would lose its defined characteristics.

There were other limitations. Geographical locations of groups would need to be considered. Current level of activity of groups would be important. A group that was no longer meeting would most likely not be included even if it met all of the intern's other requirements for inclusion.

Developing the Plan

A plan was developed for identifying self-help groups in the community. Michael Balter acted as a consultant in the development of the plan. He provided knowledge about the community and about how to communicate with people representing different organizations. Initially, existing directories would be reviewed. As many self-help organizations would be identified as possible from this review.

The formats of existing directories would be studied to help clarify what were the important facts that were needed regarding each organization. After that, leaders of professional organizations existed. Members of each self-help organization would then be contacted to gain specific data about the organization. Data gained would be evaluated and decisions would be made about which groups to include in the directory. A method for distribution would be devised.

To accomplish the tasks related to the development of a directory, contacts with workers in professional agencies and with members of self-help organizations was necessary. Both categories of people provided information about what self-help groups existed, what their purposes were and the size of their memberships. It had been expected that professionals would be valuable in the identification of what self-help organizations existed. To verify where and when meetings were held and the size and effectiveness of organizations, members of the organizations would need to be contacted. It was expected that in most instances only one member of a self-help group would need to be contacted for information about the group.

Agencies which had some affiliation with the Mental Health Board were among the first to be contacted. These agencies either received funds from the Mental Health Board or they had representatives on the Mental Health Board. Most of the other agencies identified were found in the existing Directory of Community Services published by the Vermilion County Council of Social Agencies.

This directory included professionally staffed agencies as well as some self-help organizations. The writers of this directory had done a thorough job and had included what the intern considered to be virtually all of the social service agencies which had paid staffs. Since most self-help organizations did not meet the criteria of the directory developers, they were not well represented in the Directory of Community Services. There still were numerous self-help organizations included in it. Among the well-known self-help organizations not included in this directory were Alcoholics Anonymous, Parents Without Partners, and Recovery, Incorporated. The exclusion of those significant organizations were the intern's initial clues that the directory did not have thorough representation of self-help groups in it.

There were other directories addressing where to go for services. One such directory entitled Links included a broad range of services, including social clubs, but it was not thorough in any area. Links was developed by social workers from the Council of Social Agencies; it was used primarily by the general public. There was a small directory, which had been produced by the Danville Community College, for senior citizens. It mainly had services which had particular benefit for the elderly. The Danville Chamber of Commerce had a list of clubs and organizations in Danville. There was also a directory of alcohol treatment centers in the state of Illinois. But none of these directories had a thorough listing of self-help organizations.

Identification of Organizations

Directors and other professional social workers interviewed were from twenty different agencies including: Center for Children's Services, Family Education Center, Herb Crawford Multi-Agency Center, Inc., Illinois Department of Public Health Region 3B and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Vermilion County. Letters requesting additional names of self-help groups were sent to seventeen agencies. Very early in the internship there was convincing evidence that there was a need for a directory of self-help organizations. Workers contacted knew of self-help groups, many of which were not listed in any publication in Vermilion County.

After self-help organizations were identified, it was necessary to contact them to validate that they were still in operation and to find out other significant facts about them. If social clubs and church related groups which had mutual-help qualities were to be included there would have been over one hundred organizations in the directory. Such groups were not included, however, because their self-help functions were secondary to other purposes. In cases where Danville residents had to go to Champaign or Urbana to meet with a self-help group because such a group was not available in Danville, the organizations out of Danville were considered for inclusion. Groups contacted in the validation process included Al-Anon, Alcoholics Anonymous, Babysitting Co-op, Cancer Co-op, Catholic and Other Groups For Widowed-Divorced and Separated,

Compassionate Friends, and many others. The intern attended meetings of GROW and Parents Without Partners, which were both included in the directory. Meetings of two other organizations were attended. The two other organizations attended were not included in the directory of self-help groups because they were primarily social clubs.

One important group was almost excluded because erroneous information had been given about it. In the validation process of GROW, members had told the intern that the name of GROW had originally been Recovery. Later, a letter from a social worker included Recovery, Inc., as a self-help group in Danville. The intern was able to follow up on this lead and substantiate that there was indeed a Recovery, Inc. in Danville. GROW had indeed originally been named Recovery, but it was not the same Recovery as Recovery, Inc.

Information Gained During the Identification Process

Through the process of developing a directory, the intern was able to gain information regarding the histories and structural and functional differences of self-help groups. Many groups had been in existence for a long time. Groups tended to maintain their original purposes, even when they changed in how they were led or organized. The Muscular Dystrophy Assoc., Inc. Shawnee-Illini Chapter was less of an organization for getting together and talking than it had been in the past, but it maintained its early purposes to help people who had Muscular Dystrophy. There were groups in Danville that appeared to be in the process of going out of exis-

tence. Parents Against Child Abuse was one such group. It was no longer active. Some of the early members were not ready to totally give up on it, however. There were newly emerging groups. A group for men who had been batterers of their wives and/or children had rapidly become an active, strong group. Some groups characterized helping each other more than did other groups. Such groups made open comments about how talking to one another could help people with their problems. It was concluded by the intern that the more open groups were about helping each other, the more true they were to the concept of self-help, or mutual-help.

Community Acceptance of the Intern's Project

It was desirable to have as much support as possible from people in the social service agencies and other organizations that might have some effect upon or be affected by the intern's project. The intern quickly learned that there was much communication on a frequent basis among people in the social service related positions in Danville. Therefore, a small amount of opposition could turn into a great deal of it in a short period of time.

The individuals who could readily provide meaningful support or powerful opposition to the project were not in highly prominent positions. Such people as the mayor of Danville, the chief of police, the superintendent of schools, or the top executive at the Danville-based General Motors plant were never approached by the intern, and probably never learned about the intern's project from

other sources. People with contacts with the Mental Health Board and with the Council of Social Agencies were the crucial ones to have support the development of the directory. These people were the ones who voted to allow the internship to take place. The Council of Social Agencies and the Mental Health Board had purposes related to the welfare of people, including helping people find the resources that they needed. Since the directory related to their areas of interest, members of these organizations could be expected to take a great deal of interest in the directory.

People who were related to either the Mental Health Board or the Council of Social Agencies, who could affect the outcome of the internship were the director of the Center for Family Services, the director of Big Brother/Big Sisters, the Area representative of the Illinois Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and seven to ten other people who worked for Danville based agencies.

When the intern interviewed people who could have potential effect upon the outcome of the project the intern attempted to reinforce their support by showing them respect. Paying attention to these people, and making other related gestures that demonstrated that the intern was sincerely concerned about their opinions, was important.

Agency Cooperation

The agency representatives contacted were unanimously receptive to the intern. In later discussions with Mr. Balter, it was spec-

ulated that the community social worker's favorable reactions to the intern's project were related to factors that related to him personally, such as his appearance of maturity at age forty-two, his professional credentials and experience, and to factors related to his situation, being approved by the Mental Health Board. The directory of self-help groups most probably seemed to be a good idea to these community agency workers; it would give them a new tool with no effort on their parts, except for participation in brief interviews.

From the onset, workers in community service agencies readily provided names and information regarding self-help organizations. During the initial weeks, each interview provided data on at least one self-help group previously not identified by the intern. Public health service, Salvation Army, Mental Health Clinic, and many other agencies were contacted, all were providers of information about what self-help groups existed in the community.

When the data collected were compared to information on self-help organizations in existing directories, it was further substantiated that a directory of self-help groups was needed. Over half of the self-help organizations identified in the intern's search were not listed in existing directories.

Leaders and other members of self-help organizations readily provided information about their organizations. They all expressed positive feelings about the development of a directory of self-help groups and stated that they would like to have a copy for themselves.

Some social workers and other professionals were members of self-help groups. In some cases, the professional people were not in leadership positions in their groups. In some organizations, the professionals were selected for leadership positions because other members thought that they would make good leaders. According to O. Hobard Mowrer (1980) professionals can have a variety of roles in mutual-help groups, and they do not necessarily have to be the leaders. Gartner and Riessman (1980) have made substantially the same conclusions.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL FINDINGS

The intern learned that a community organizer can be effective in completing a community problem related project through the use of systematic problem solving processes. It was necessary to enlist the cooperation of key community agency workers to achieve the objectives of the project. It had proven to be a wise idea to concentrate on the development of a directory and not to invest a great deal of energy in the arrangements of an educational conference which had been considered early in the internship. There was only enough time during the internship to complete the directory and there was none left over to work on an educational conference. It was fortunate that the key community workers referred to in this report, decided to sponsor a conference for these reasons: First, since it was their conference, they worked to make it a success. Second, it was an excellent modality for distributing the self-help directory to Danville social workers.

Conceptual

According to Piaget, participation is necessary for learning to take place (1970, pp. 1-15). The steps in experiential learning are: to carry out actions and then to observe the effects of those actions, to understand the effects and to make generalizations from experiences (Keeton, 1976, pp. 51-53). In this project, the exper-

iential learning related to facilitating a community problem-solving project were impressive--for the intern. Small achievements in the work were reinforcements which helped the intern to continue throughout the internship (Salomon & Sabena, 1977, p. 184).

Boles has stated, "Thus, it is the addition of purpose to the learning process which distinguishes it from learning" (1973, p. 16). He was discussing education. Since there was a purpose which unified the intern's learning process, an education experience was achieved. The purpose of the intern was to produce a directory which would assist community members to become more aware of the self-help organizations available to them.

The intern was able to observe how key community leaders could influence decisions (Dunham, 1958, pp. 30-42). By approaching influential people from what proved to be an effective approach, the intern was able to bring about their endorsement and collective efforts to make the project succeed. It was also revealed how communication worked among people in power positions in Danville. Much work was done in discussing between two people, and sometimes over the telephone instead of in person. To gain the acceptance for the development of a directory of self-help groups the intern had to work closely with a small number of key community leaders. It was speculated that almost any of the agency directors contacted could have effected a veto of the project. Thomas asserted that it was necessary to have the support of community decision makers in a project to have a successful experience (1976, p. 28).

It can not be generalized from the process of this project that other communities communicate in the same manner as those in Danville. Community size, group cohesion and many other factors are important determinants of community communication patterns.

Human

To become familiar with the attitudes of local social service and other community workers towards self-help organizations, the intern had numerous interviews with community workers. Among organizations represented in these contacts were American Cancer Society, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Vermillion Co., Center for Children's Services, Department of Correction, Juvenile Divisions, East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging, Family Service Bureau, Herb Crawford Multi-Agency Center, Inc., Hoopeston Multi-Agency Service Center, Illinois Department of Children's and Family Service, Salvation Army, Senior Adult Meal Program and Vermillion County Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

Most of the self-help groups identified in this project were found through discussions with paid community workers. There was not one community worker identified who had a full grasp of the extent of self-help organizations available in Vermillion County. Most workers knew only of two to four self-help organizations in the area. Agency workers tended to know only about the self-help groups that had some logical relationship with their agency. A worker at the Department of Children and Family Services would certainly know about Parents' Anonymous, but he might not

know about a cancer-related self-help organization. As a rule, workers in one type agency might not need information about self-help organizations which addressed problems that were not closely related to the problems usually handled at their own agency, but there could be times when information regarding self-help groups for other problems would be useful. The information gathered regarding a broad range of self-help organizations could have value to many different agency workers. Therefore, it was apparent that it was desirable for these workers to share their knowledge of self-help organizations with each other.

Leadership of the Council of Social Agencies was much interested in the need to provide information regarding self-help organizations to the community. It was agreed that when the next revision of the Vermilion County Directory of Community Services was released that more self-help organizations would be included. A spring workshop on self-help groups would also serve to stimulate community awareness of self-help organizations.

The intern gained information about many organizations that were not true self-help organizations. The category of social clubs and fraternal organizations was investigated to determine if they were appropriate to be included in the directory. One of the mayor's assistants provided information regarding eight social clubs for blacks. Some of them provided services to the community and provided emotional support to group members. One black social club was the Untouchables, a motorcycle club. It was commonly believed that most of the members were law abiding citizens. They

raised money for deprived children and performed other services for the community.

It was decided that to include social clubs in the directory would broaden the directory to such an extent that the directory would not achieve the originally desired characteristics.

Technical

In human services, practice skills are inseparably linked to professional knowledge. The practices of the internship were based upon professional knowledge regarding how to involve the community in a problem solving project. Even though there was some trial and error, the trials were based on educated hunches. Information gained from literature, interviews with practitioners and educators, as well as the intern's existing knowledge of community organization theory contributed towards these educated hunches.

There were reasons to believe that a directory of self-help organizations in Danville was needed. To test this hypothetical position, procedures were followed to find out if there was a discrepancy between existing self-help organizations and knowledge of professionals about such groups. The intern was able to utilize interviews and a survey to agency directors to facilitate the gathering of information.

The intern was able to make judgements regarding the desirability of public advertising to gain information about the existence of self-help groups. It was concluded that newspaper advertising would be counter-indicated. A large advertising effort would be

too costly for the project and a small advertising effort would be ineffective. It was feared that advertising would be considered unorthodox by some community workers and could work towards discrediting the project. These conclusions were reinforced by knowledge gained from interactions made in the project.

The intern gained skill in gathering relevant information and using discussions to solve problems. A scheme for gathering information and mobilizing a relevant part of the community to solve a problem was developed. Essentially this was to work with community workers who could have an impact on the goals of the project. Through interviews with workers, their support of the project was gained. In-person and telephone discussions were utilized to involve membership of self-help organizations in the project.

Through individual discussions and a formal conference with the executive committee of the Council of Social Agencies, a large seminar type conference, to include self-help organizations as a subject, was planned. The Council of Social Agencies executive committee agreed to reproduce the directory so that all attending the spring conference could have one.

There are technical problems related to developing a directory. A primary task related to the development is whether to approach the problem primarily as a pragmatist. The nature of the project suggested that goals, deadlines, and other practical issues be given most importance. The intern, with Mr. Balter's guidance, developed cut-off points for dealing with the various aspects of

the project. These cut-off points were related to the amount of time allotted for the internship. There are times when administrators need to make decisions, whether or not they have what they consider to be optional information.

After discovering that there was a National Clearing House of Self-Help Groups, making contact with it by telephone and letter, and often obtaining Help: A Working Guide to Self-Help Groups (Gartner & Riessman, 1980), it was apparent that self-help organizations were firmly established providers of human services. The intern obtained Gartner & Riessman's directory at a point in the internship when the Danville directory was essentially completed. The intern's directory included all of the national self-help organizations that had chapters in Vermilion County and that were listed in the national directory. Danville's directory also had numerous self-help groups that were particular to the Danville area and were not listed in the national directory. In the manner that organizations were chosen and described (format), the Danville directory was quite similar to the national directory. The intern considered this similarity to be an indicator that the local directory had credibility.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

Workers in professional social service related agencies, who were contacted, were accepting of the intern's project. Most of the contacted workers made contributions by giving names of self-help organizations and, in some instances, names and telephone numbers of members of those organizations. It was found that numerous self-help groups existed in Danville. Workers tended to know of the self-help groups which were, by problem addressed, related to their agencies, but they usually did not know of many other self-help organizations.

Many important self-help groups related to cancer patients, single parents, women's issues and other areas were not operating as groups in Vermilion County. For example, Danville had Parent's Anonymous but not Parents Without Partners. More organizations were available in Champaign, Urbana than in Danville. It seemed reasonable that many Danville residents would find it difficult to go to Champaign or Urbana for services. In addition, Champaign and Urbana were much different than Danville. Danville was primarily a manufacturing community and Champaign and Urbana were university and professional related communities. The thirty-five mile distance from Danville to Champaign and Urbana could have been inhibitors for people.

At the time of this internship, there were several directories

of community services in Danville. A directory developed by the Council of Social Agencies had comprehensive representation of social agencies in it, but only listed a small number of self-help groups. The intern believed that it would be necessary to receive the approval of leadership in the Council of Social Agencies to successfully develop a directory of self-help groups. Support from those leaders was obtained. Consequently, members of that organization made valuable contributions to the intern including being accepted by the community workers in his data collection and ultimately in the production of a directory of self-help organizations.

The key to the intern's acceptance by social agency leaders seemed to be, what could be described as a non-threatening attitude. The intern was careful to convey that he wanted to make a contribution to the community; in doing so, he would not draw attention to short-comings in the efforts of those who had developed other directories. The atmosphere of trust developed by community workers towards the intern was crucial in the project's success.

The seminar on self-help groups held in April, 1981, which was originally planned to be a by-product of the internship, was well attended, with fifty-five participants, and was a means for the distribution of the newly developed directory of self-help organizations accessible to Vermillion County.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Internship Log

APPENDIX A

Internship Log

August 28, 1980

The intern had the first meeting with Mr. Michael Balter after the Vermilion County Community Mental Health 708 Board had been chosen as a site for the internship. The nature of the internship was clarified. The intern was to be a facilitator in a community organization project. The aim would be to mobilize the resources of a community to solve a problem. The problem was to bring about better community knowledge of self-help groups and to improve communication and mutual referrals between self-help groups and established welfare, community agencies. It was agreed that certain organizations were clearly self-help groups but that other organizations were not. There were some organizations that provided mutual support that might not be considered self-help organizations.

The development of a directory of self-help organizations in Vermilion County was decided upon as the primary task of the internship.

Mr. Balter and the intern wondered if bowling clubs, social clubs, and fraternal organizations were self-help organizations. It was agreed to discuss method of operation after September board meeting.

Outcome: Areas of consideration were discussed. Goals of internship were discussed and essentially chosen.

September 8, 1980--September 12, 1980

On September 8, 1980, the intern presented to Vermilion County Community Mental Health 708 Board a proposal for project on self-help program. The Board agreed to allow Mr. Balter time to supervise the internship. The Board agreed to allow use of the board headquarters for the project.

September 15, 1980--September 19, 1980

On September 17, 1980, the intern attended a meeting of the Council of Social Agencies with the purpose to meet some of the leaders in the social agency community, to begin to understand how decisions were made in the community for later use in attempting to bring about desired results in the internship. Met co-chair persons of the organization, the Special Projects Director, 118 School Board, and the Director of Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

In relationship to the directory project, one person attending the meeting mentioned that several self-help organizations were in a directory which the Children's Center had produced, entitled Links II. He expressed the opinion that most of the self-help groups in Danville were in Links II. The intern stated that it would make work very simple if he could find a single source already in existence.

Findings: It was relatively easy to meet leadership in Danville. They had information regarding Danville. Some believed that a directory was already in existence that included all of the

self-help organizations in the community. The intern doubted if that were the case but planned to examine all existing directories.

September 17, 1980

The intern traveled to Champaign and visited a friend who was a patient at Carle Clinic.

The talk with patient brought awareness of cancer patient's needs. One need is a continuity of relationships. Related to that, is the need for conversation with another person. Talked with member of Carle Clinic Auxiliary.

Findings: Auxiliary as a volunteer program is not considered a self-help group. It brought more awareness of different types of organizations. Noted: By being in an environment where needs exist, ideas about self-help groups come spontaneously.

The intern went to the library, University of Illinois (Education Department) and made arrangements to have a computer search of articles on self-help groups. Intern glanced at several journals and easily located additional articles of self-help organizations.

Findings: Library excellent resources. An appointment was made for 3:00 p.m. on September 17, 1980. Operator will help with computer search.

Summary: At Carle Clinic the intern attended to Cancer patients as a need group. The intern talked to a volunteer and decided that auxiliary group did not constitute a self-help group because the volunteers did not identify themselves as people with the same

problem as the patient. At the University Library the intern read articles and planned a computer search. The intern wanted a theoretical basis as quickly as possible to help activate the project. Throughout the program will make connections between theory and the situations to be found.

September 18, 1980

The intern drove to library at University of Illinois. The library worker ran a computer search on self-help groups.

Findings: Intern found many articles and will have abstracts printed.

After finishing activity at library, intern met with Tony Vattano, an associate professor of the School of Social Work at University of Illinois. Dr. Vattano is the author of several articles on "self-help" groups. He advised me of more readings and updated me on the movement. He said the "self-help" groups was rather new field and was gaining acceptance with consumers and professional community. He also discussed the principle work of Hobart Mowrer, integrity groups.

Dr. Vattano said that Hobart Mowrer of the psychology department of University of Illinois had become widely known as the creator of integrity groups. Dr. Vattano gave me reprints of articles by himself and also by Dr. Mowrer.

Summary: This was an important interview; one which will be discussed more in the final write up because it confirmed the position that the self-help movement was very large and that it had made tangible gains in professional and public acceptance. It also confirmed that the University of Illinois schools of social work and psychology were important resources regarding self-help groups.

September 21, 1980---September 26, 1980

The intern reviewed articles and personal notes on self-help groups.

Findings: Certain activist groups, such as welfare activists, can be considered self-help groups. The intern reaffirmed conclusion that professionals and self-help groups can have successful relationship for referral and facilitation. The modern mood of people to not rely on professionals but to trust their own judgment and to consider information gathered from peers with receptivity was addressed.

Summary: The movement away from authoritarian models to more egalitarian ones contributes to the development of mutual-help organizations.

The intern broadened his thinking regarding self-help organizations to include cause or advocacy oriented ones.

September 22, 1980

This week the intern worked afternoons and at convenient periods on weekends. Much time was spent in telephoning social

work agencies to set up interviews. Workers at those agencies will helpfully give leads regarding self-help groups. If they do not give enough leads, other sources of information will be needed.

September 29, 1980--October 3, 1980

The intern reviewed literature on self-help groups. The intern still needed to gain knowledge concerning the range and potential groups and what groups could be considered self-help. Mike Balter, supervisor, discussed direction of project and various little known groups. He related discussion to plan of operations. Early stages to make contacts with professionals.

The intern visited a medical doctor in Danville. He gave broader picture of comments and needs of individuals i.e., woman who can't get welfare, has no health insurance but needs medical treatment in Danville. Note: She appeared to be incapable of getting help for herself or for bringing about change. But with others with similar problems, she could have power through the collective organization.

The intern reviewed projected nature of internship experience. In going to agencies intern will ask for knowledge about additional directories. The intern will also ask agency leaders questions pertaining to the existence and availability of self-help groups. The intern will attend open meetings of one or more of the organizations. He did not expect to do everything in planned sequence. On first order he would plan to go to agency directors.

The intern interviewed the director of Children's Service in Danville, Illinois. He gave information of Parents Anonymous and Family Education Center, run by Volunteers for Community. He also mentioned Junior Chamber of Commerce. He said that he thought the directory project had merits.

The intern interviewed the Area Director of Department of Vocational Rehabilitation at 12 E. Williams, Danville, Illinois. Also present were two other social workers. They gave information on self-help groups, Families of the Deaf, Diabetes Association, Babysitting Co-ops, and other groups. They gave many good leads with contact information.

Later the intern telephoned contacts including the Director of CETA. He contributed names of people to talk to in Mayor's office.

Conclusion: Three agencies contacted. Workers at each agency had information about self-help groups. One group mentioned was Architectural Barriers Committee. The Architectural Barriers Committee is well known in Danville because of a very hard working leader who himself is in a wheel chair. It is mainly an advocacy organization.

Usually workers at one agency did not know about all of the self-help groups that workers at another agency knew. This indicated that information needed to be shared between agencies.

The intern interviewed the director of Adult Meal Service of Vermillion County. This is an agency run by professionals and was not self-help. Organization serves 320 lunches a day at twelve

different locations to senior citizens who are 60 years and older. Not exactly a self-help group, but she was aware of Senior Citizen Retiree Association in Vermilion County. There were no Grey Panthers in Vermilion County but we discussed recent visit by Maggie Kuhn, Director of Grey Panthers. She also discussed singles groups in Danville, particularly for older citizens; one such was Danville Religious Association Singles Groups. Intern made telephone calls for appointments and returned calls.

In telephone discussions with Mr. Balter and another social worker, intern identified an additional resource directory, one for senior citizens. It was prepared by the Danville Community College in 1976. Only a small number of self-help organizations were listed.

The intern reviewed material on Parents Without Partners and looked over Links II directory in social agencies, which included some self-help groups, notably Rent-A-Kid, Parents Anonymous (P. A.), and Rent-A-Kid provides part-time jobs for youth. P. A. was a self-help group for parents who have abused their children. The intern looked at Senior Citizen Directory of Service which was provided by Danville Community College. The intern attempted to call American Cancer Society, and decided to visit in Champaign, Illinois.

The intern talked with a worker at the American Cancer Society. She provided much information, including a Larynectory self-help group, called New Voice Club, and an iliostomy self-help group, plus two groups for families of cancer patients.

Of the first three social workers interviewed, they only identified between three and eight self-help groups apiece and that only one or two self-help groups were mentioned by more than one person.

The intern telephoned community action organization and CETA office to set up appointments. The intern would have two interviews through these calls next week, one with the Architectural Barriers Committee coordinator. The intern would talk to the Director at Community Action organization about progress there. The intern talked to a coordinator of Singles Adult Ministries at Ridgeview Baptist Church. She talked about needs of singles.

October 6, 1980--October 10, 1980

The intern interviewed a worker at Vermilion County Health Department. She described the services of the health department ranging from visiting nurses to venereal disease clinic. She knew of no self-help groups. The intern asked her if she had even heard of "HELP," a national informational self-help group for individuals with herpes? She had not.

The intern interviewed the director of Salvation Army in Danville. He told of programs of Salvation Army and gave a lead about the Women's Home League of the Salvation Army. New homemaker wives were helped to develop basic home making skills, cooking, taking care of children, and other skills considered useful. New members later become teachers and helpers themselves. Even though

the Salvation Army is a religious organization, the Home League had enough self-help qualities to be considered.

The Salvation Army worked with transients. The director perceived a need for coordination with other church groups--a special need in community for more systematized approach to transients. The transient problem seemed to be more of a community organization problem than one directly related to self-help groups.

October 13, 1980--October 17, 1980

The intern interviewed the director at Big Brothers/Big Sisters Organization. He was director of that agency and also co-chair person of the Danville Council of Social Agencies. The intern asked him for specific resources as well as consultation regarding the direction of the project. He was impressed with the information that there were probably numerous self-help groups in Danville and not just a few. The feasibility and possible benefits of a conference on self-help organizations was discussed.

The director listed about four or five self-help groups. He did not consider Big Brothers/Big Sisters to be one because the people helping were not of the same status as the recipients. Specific self-help groups he mentioned were Parent Anonymous and Parents In Action (P. I. A.). He suggested that the intern call one of the coordinators in School District 118 and also a committee member of Council of Social Agencies. He has been in search of workshop ideas. He was in favor of a workshop.

Conclusion: The director of Big Brothers, a young man of about thirty, had an influential office as co-chair person of the Council of Social Agency Committee. His support of the directory could help facilitate the development of it and the usage of it by the community. It was noted during this meeting that most of the influential social workers in Danville had easy access to each other and that impressions and decisions could be quickly affected through their almost casual social network. Therefore, one influential person potentially could totally obstruct a project that might otherwise be very acceptable to the others. One person's influence would not necessarily insure the success of a project unless the person has sufficient resources to bring about economic or political sanctions on other members.

October 20, 1980--October 24, 1980

On October 19, 1980, after discussion with Mr. Balter, the intern worked on a letter to go to social service agencies. The purpose of the letter was to follow-up interviews to extract data that might have been previously overlooked.

It would request that agencies list known self-help groups by name, address, and telephone number. It would be a working summary aimed to uncover isolated groups that might otherwise be missed. The main data gathering device would remain interviews with social work agencies. Later contacts would be made with members of the groups to substantiate their existences and conditions.

Result: The intern completed rough draft of letter. Additional note: Intern concentrated on presenting project accurately and gaining good will and co-operation of participants.

On October 20, 1980, the intern rewrote draft of letter to agency personnel. The intern typed final draft of material and did mailing. This week the intern would do more follow-up calls, especially to one official about possible conference on self-help groups. The intern would set up consultation with St. Louis University for later in the week and investigate self-help groups in large metropolitan area. The intern planned to consult with Joan Smith, School of Social Work, who has experience in self-help groups.

The intern had meeting with Supervisor of 708 Board and discussed need for sharper direction. The intern typed, xeroxed and mailed letters to directors of social work agencies (for follow-up information).

Mr. Balter was concerned that dividing the focus between a directory and a conference could hinder the clarity of the intern's vision (that the directory project would suffer). The intern pointed out that the main project would be the directory and that priorities would be given to it. Mr. Balter was not totally convinced that the intern was correct. He requested that it be given more consideration. The intern agreed to do so. Differences are natural. The ability to work harmoniously to resolve conflicts is necessary for successful administration.

On October 24, 1980, the intern visited a supervisor at St. Louis State Hospital. He discussed special needs of mental patients and alcoholics. He said, except for A. A., self-help groups were not very well known.

He discussed aspects of social services. He told how policies and personnel in higher positions could change one's working conditions, in some instances negatively. The discussion related more to leadership and administration than to self-help groups.

October 27, 1980--October 31, 1980

In 1965-1966, the intern was part of a class on research at St. Louis University which studied self-help groups. Miss Joan Smith taught the class. Twelve master's degree students were involved in the project. At that time, the students interviewed members of self-help groups to assess whether or not the groups enhanced their social and emotional functioning. The data collected supported the conceptionalization that self-help groups did enhance people's emotional functioning.

Miss Smith for today had put aside time for the intern and expressed delight that the subject of self-help groups was being addressed. She stated that in the middle sixties most self-help groups were related to medical handicaps, but since then there has been a trend towards cause related self-help groups, especially regarding discriminated against groups. Presently women's groups were the most notable. In the development of the directory of

self-help groups, she encouraged attention to the cause related organizations as well as mutual support related ones.

Assessment: The conference with Miss Smith was valuable and was highly encouraging and helped with intern's direction.

On October 28, 1980, intern talked with Mr. Balter and discussed with him the conference with Miss Smith. He concurred that attention should be given to both of the primary types of self-help groups, emotional supportive and cause related ones.

The intern reopened discussion of direction of internship, interjecting that he had felt that processes involved in developing a directory could have true professional merits. Deciding upon objectives, methods of pursuing those objectives, and terminal learning skills related to the directory promised many valuable learning experiences.

On October 28, 1980, the intern had lunch with an assistant to the school superintendent in Danville to discuss directory and also educational conference on social agencies.

He provided a hand written list of people to call regarding self-help groups. In his opinion, there was a need to help the social service practitioners in Danville to become more knowledgeable regarding all types of human welfare resources.

He mentioned the Council of Social Agencies' tentatively planned educational conference for the spring and that "where to go for help" would be a likely subject. He said it was possible that half of the program might be related to self-help organizations.

Assessment: The school offered interest in a conference related to places to go for help presented possibilities to enrich the internship. Community interest in self-help groups would add to the value of a directory and to subsequent usage of such a directory. It was becoming apparent that opportunities could help shape the direction of projects. No project could succeed without opportunities or resources.

Later the intern reviewed material from St. Louis University on self-help groups from interview with Joan Smith and other thoughts of citizens of self-help groups. Should groups for discriminated against people be included? Yes. Should groups of extremists, i.e., Ku Klux Klan, be included? No. Why not? The community would find it offensive. What about special groups for convicts, associations of professionals, unions, or veterans' groups? Intern would talk to Mr. Balter and ask if the community would want them included. The intern talked to a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Center. V.F.W. meets criteria for self-help organization. The intern had discussion with member of Parents Without Partners to clarify purposes of organization.

Plan: The intern needed to follow leads given by agency directors.

Intern called the school official back to answer a question he had and to further his support.

Question: Should lodges and fraternal organizations be included if they have a self-help aspect?

October 31, 1980, intern talked to Ollie Bowker of Ridgeview One Aim Single in Spirit (ROASIS), a singles group at Ridgeview Baptist Church, regarding a singles retreat in Indianapolis.

Question: Should singles groups and other social groups be included? Are these self-help organizations?

The intern talked with a special education teacher who mentioned that there was a self-help group for parents of exceptional children. She said she would provide the name of a contact person.

The intern talked with the coordinator of "My Group." This is a group for men who have been batterers. It meets on Sundays between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. at University YMCA, Urbana, Illinois. There are additional men's support groups.

Related Thoughts: Today the intern had contacts with people representing wide range of groups, church related singles, exceptional children and battering husbands. The intern needed to know about a wide range of activities before he could become wisely discriminating about which organizations to include in a directory.

November 2, 1980--November 7, 1980

The intern interviewed a member of ROASIS group, Ridgeview One Aim Single In Spirit. "A group of singles of all ages and a few who aren't single who meet on Sunday mornings and share experiences and feelings. We have fun by getting to know each other better . . . having pot lucks . . . helping each other more . . . tearing down barns . . . having garage sales . . . retreats . . . and having more

pot lucks, we love to eat!" (from ROASIS bulletin).

The intern met with an official of Hyster Co. and member of ROASIS. Discussed were problems facing singles. The official mentioned a self-help group for bereaved. She also mentioned a singles group at the Rock Church.

The intern telephoned a member of "Friends of the Deaf" who has a deaf daughter. She is a leader in the organization. Recently there was a feature story in the main Danville paper, Commercial News, about "Friends of the Deaf."

The intern attended Parents Without Partners, P. W. P., activities.

Note: There was a positive interaction among group and members appeared to enjoy the evening's activities.

On November 4, 1980, the intern talked to Mr. Balter about letters. They have been mailed but none had yet been answered. Intern reiterated to Mr. Balter that the surveys were designed to get factual data about existence of self-help groups. They would not provide any information regarding the level of functioning or the value of the organizations. Mr. Balter agreed that at this point we should aim at locating organizations, not evaluating them.

The intern reviewed notes from interviews, especially to make note of leads to be followed. Intern called an administrative assistant to the superintendent of the 118 school board, to further encourage him to include the subject of self-help groups in the spring conference (educational).

On November 5, 1980, the intern worked on format of directory, also tried to reach a leader of Compassionate Friends. Intern talked to her husband briefly. Intern put some groups into format.

Outcome: The format of pages are to be identical to C.S.A. directory. Some self-help-like groups will be included if they have strong factors of self-help groups and only miss one or two criteria. For example, Big Brothers is a volunteer service. Another group is Muscular Dystrophy Assoc. Inc. organization. It continues to have mutual-help aspects but is mainly advocacy related.

The intern made plans to contact "Grow," a self-help group for individuals who have experienced mental distress. It meets on Thursday nights at the YWCA in Danville, Illinois.

On November 4, 1980, the intern made several telephone calls, including to service representatives, a paid staff member of the Disabled American Veterans, D. A. V. This organization is for the disabled American veterans; providing advocacy for disability claims, recognition services, mutual support and social activities for veterans. Intern decided that organization was definitely a self-help organization, even though it had paid staff on some levels.

The intern telephoned Danville YWCA for scheduling of "Grow," a self-help group for people who have experienced mental or emotional problems. The receptionist at the YWCA said "Grow" met on Thursday evening at 7:30 p.m. She knew no telephone numbers of members. She suggested that intern call about 7:00 Thursday or visit meeting.

Intern talked to a social worker at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Danville, Illinois. She mentioned two self-help groups and referred

the intern to two other workers at the hospital who worked closer with self-help groups than she did.

The intern telephoned a social service worker at Lake View Medical Center, Danville, Illinois. The worker talked about several groups for Cancer patients, one for heart patients, and one for kidney patients.

Observation: The hospital social service people were quite familiar with self-help groups. An interdependency between hospital workers and, relevant to them, self-help groups seemed to exist.

Mr. Balter discussed with intern the importance of having the certain people who have influence involved in any community organizational activities.

Later, the intern looked through directories, including yellow pages, to identify previously unidentified self-help groups. These would be included with groups that were recently identified. Mr. Balter asked question, "Do private practitioners, notably medical doctors, make referrals to self-help groups?"

Goal: Next week intern planned to have format of directory developed. In the following week intern will have rough draft of directory.

On November 7, 1980, intern worked on specific write-ups of groups, i.e., Parents Without Partners (P.W.P.). Intern had sufficient literature and informal conversational material to write up about its functions. P.W.P. in Champaign is a large organization with over 500 members, many of whom are from Danville. Danville members car-pool-it to P.W.P. meetings and one or two meetings of

P.W.P. are held in Danville every month. Group members receive much mutual support and have opportunities for enjoyment at parties.

At least once a week P.W.P. has activities either specifically for children of members or involving children with the parents.

The intern was able to telephone the president of the Compassionate Friends. This organization is for parents who have experienced having a child die. From what the president said the group provides meaningful support to each other and members are available to each other at all times of the day to help parents, having a difficult time in coping. She expressed an interest in having voluntary professional resources for her group.

The intern had brief discussion with Mr. Balter. He turned over some log notes. Later that day intern talked with the person who coordinates services to families of cancer patients at Carle Clinic in Champaign. She discussed a group held at Carle Clinic called Cancer Recoup Group.

November 8, 1980--November 14, 1980

The intern wrote a foreword to the directory for self-help groups. He made decisions regarding which groups to include and which ones not to include.

November 11, 1980

The intern looked at directories, organized material and had a conference with Mr. Balter to discuss expectations.

The intern had a telephone conversation with member of the Greater Danville Religious Association Singles Group.

November 13, 1980

The intern attended GROW at Y.W.C.A. The group reaffirmed his belief in the value of such groups. This is an ideal-type self-help group that meets all criteria. Individual testimonies strengthened belief that these organizations do help people.

November 14, 1980

The intern telephoned an official of the Mayor's Community Relations Office. He gave leads on black social groups. He talked in detail regarding social clubs. These clubs were no more self-help than most other social clubs, even though some of the clubs provided community services, i.e., sponsored sports teams. Clubs named were: Royalties, Ritzy Matrons, Tuxedo Club, Untouchables, Deluxe Club, and the Every-Now-and-Then Club.

The official also discussed the service of the Community Action Agency. It has assumed some of the advocacy and group support work that formerly was done by more grass-root related organizations.

The intern talked to the president of Family Education Center. She gave up-date on services and why it is a self-help organization. Intern talked to Mike Balter on phone two times for clarification and little helps.

Intern went by Chamber of Commerce to pick up its handouts.

November 17, 1980--November 21, 1980

Three female social workers at the Veterans Administration Medical Center, Danville, Illinois, were consulted regarding women's organizations in Vermilion and Champaign Counties. The groups mentioned were The Women's Resource Information Exchange (WIRE) located at Parkland College in Champaign.

The intern telephoned WIRE. He was given numerous organizations from Abortion Rights to the Gay/Lesbian Switchboard.

Numerous small self-help groups for women existed in Champaign. Some are short lived. WIRE workers could help callers find organizations that are right for them.

The intern decided to include WIRE and many of the groups give by WIRE in the directory.

November 18, 1980

The intern went through Danville directories, especially C.S.A. Intern picked out groups in C.S.A. that were still applicable. The intern worked on leads about Women's organizations given yesterday after calling WIRE.

November 20, 1980

The intern attended GROW meeting and went to coffee with members after the meeting. Intern observed that GROW had a helping quality and thought how it was a support system. The content of the meeting was confidential.

November 24, 1980--November 28, 1980

Today a worker at the Center for Children and a coordinator for Youth Teaching Youth, was interviewed. A worker at the Family Education Center was interviewed regarding Parent Teaching. A professor at the School of Social Work at the University of Illinois was telephoned. He gave information regarding The National Clearing House for Self-Help Groups and a directory about national self-help groups. This directory could give leads and suggest organizations of a director. There were calls made regarding groups for Exceptional Children, Mexican-American groups, Weight Watchers (a business therefore a quasi-self-help group). The telephone number for the National Clearing House for Self-Help Groups is (212) 790-4395.

December 1, 1980--December 5, 1980

The intern met with a member of GROW to let her read what had been written about GROW. She told of social activities through Champaign chapters.

December 2, 1980

The intern called a worker for the Mexicans-Americans, Ayudanos Ayndar, (Help Us to Help) in Hoopston. The lady was very friendly. She operated out of a trailer and told details of the group. Intern talked to two social workers at St. Elizabeth Hospital and was given a number to call regarding "Couple to Couple," an organization related to birth control.

The intern talked to a worker about Youth Tutoring Youth again for some clarification. Intern also talked to special education coordinator about exceptional children, etc. The intern made a brief call to Mr. Balter for report advice and schedule of the next conference. The intern needed to run down the women's groups, Veterans' Services, and elderly groups. The intern now had leads on "TOPS."

The intern talked to an active member of Muscular Dystrophy group. It is a large organization with self-help qualities.

December 6, 1980

The intern went to library in Danville and got list of women's organizations from reference desk dated 1977. There were a number of inaccuracies in the list related to events since 1977. Some services listed were no longer available.

The intern called Chuck Ferris and got information on Parents Against Child Abuse. He also gave direction for other foster parent groups.

December 8, 1980--December 12, 1980

On December 9, 1980, the intern called Alcoholics Anonymous. The man who answered thought that the intern had a drinking problem and the intern had a hard time convincing the man that he only wanted some information. The intern then called a community member about the League of Women Voters. She talked about "Contact," a

new help line that is not yet in operation. She also gave telephone numbers of some people in other women's groups. Intern called about Foster Parent Group and Recovery, Inc. Intern obtained another lead from a leader at the Community Action agency. He gave some information about Tenant Union at Fair Oaks and reiterated how the Community Action Agency, CAA, had taken over most advocacy roles in Danville.

Note: Some organizations keep a low profile because they want a select membership.

December 12, 1980--December 15, 1980

The intern completed writing directory and had final conference with Mr. Balter.

Appendix B

Self-Help Groups Accessible to Vermilion County

Self-Help Groups Accessible to Vermilion County

Index

AGORAPHOBIA
 AL-ANON
 ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
 AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS
 ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION
 BABYSITTING CO-OP
 CANCER CO-OP
 CANCER RECOUP GROUP
 CATHOLIC AND OTHER GROUPS FOR WIDOWED-DIVORCED AND SEPARATED
 COMMUNITY DIABETES EDUCATION PROGRAM
 COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
 COUPLE TO COUPLE LEAGUE
 DANVILLE PARENTS AGAINST CHILD ABUSE
 FAMILY EDUCATION CENTER
 FRIENDS OF THE DEAF
 GAY/LESBIAN SWITCH BOARD
 GROW
 THE HOME LEAGUE
 KIDNEY CLUB
 LA LECHE LEAGUE
 MEXICANO-AMERICANO, AYUDANOS AYNDAR, (HELP US TO HELP)
 MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY ASSOC., INC. SHAWNEE-ILLINI CHAPTER
 MY GROUP
 NEW VOICE CLUB
 PARENTS ANONYMOUS OF VERMILION COUNTY
 PARENTS WITHOUT PARTNERS CHAPTER #42
 RAPE HOTLINE
 REACH TO RECOVERY
 RECOVERY, INC.
 TENANT UNION AT FAIR OAKS
 TOPS
 UNITED CEREBRAL PALSY OF FIVE RIVERS
 UNITED OSTOMY ASSOCIATION
 VERMILION COUNTY ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS COMMITTEE
 VERMILION COUNTY ASSOCIATION FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES
 VERMILION COUNTY BLIND ASSOCIATION
 VERMILION COUNTY FOSTER PARENTS ASSOCIATION
 VERMILION COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
 VETERAN'S FOSTER PARENT AUXILIARY GROUP
 VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION
 WOMEN AT HOME
 WOMEN'S INFORMATION AND RESOURCE EXCHANGE---WIRE
 WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM---WILPF
 WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION IN DANVILLE
 YOUTH TUTORING YOUTH IN HOUSE TUTORING SERVICE
 (Copy of complete directory available from Vermilion County Community
 708 Mental Health Board, Danville, Illinois 61832)

Appendix C

Announcement from Spring Publication on Council of Social Agencies

Announcement from Spring Publication of
Council of Social Agencies

On Friday, April 10, 12:00 - 4:00 p.m., a workshop entitled, "New Avenues: In-Roads for Challenging Times," is planned. This workshop is co-sponsored by the Council for Social Agencies and the Business and Economic Institute of Danville Area Community College.

The key speakers and topics for this seminar will be:

Mr. Tony Vatano, Associate Professor
School of Social Welfare, University of Illinois
"Understanding the Dynamics of Mutual Help"

Dave Anderson, Social Worker
Veterans Administration Medical Center
"Self-Help Group Resources in Vermilion County"

Mike Doyle, Executive Director
Champaign County Health Care Consumers
"Fundraising from Private Foundations"

Farley Peters, Attorney at Law
Legislative Support Center, Springfield
"Lobbying and Legislative Processes"
"How to Have Impact on Public Policy from the
Grass Roots Level"

Appendix D

Statement on National Self-Help Clearinghouse

NATIONAL SELF-HELP CLEARINGHOUSE
Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York
33 West 42nd Street, Room 1227, New York, NY 10036 (212) 840-7606

The Self-Help Reporter is a free bi-monthly newsletter featuring short articles on self-help mutual aid groups around the country and abroad. In addition to spotlighting several groups in depth in each issue, a regular column called "In a nutshell..." features short items about what is happening in the self-help field. Other regular features include a column discussing research in the field and recently published materials available from or about self-help mutual aid groups. Also includes short features discussing aspects of self-help mutual aid theory.

A Joint Activity of
New Human Services Institute/CASE
Graduate School and University Center
of the City University of New York
and Social Policy Magazine

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