

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE REVISION OF AN ORIENTATION PROGRAM  
FOR MIDLIFE HOMEMAKERS  
BASED ON A RE-ENTRY TRANSITION PROCESS MODEL

BY

RITA LECUYER

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THE REVISION OF AN ORIENTATION PROGRAM FOR MIDLIFE HOMEMAKERS  
BASED ON A RE-ENTRY TRANSITION PROCESS MODEL

BY

RITA LECUYER

A practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this practicum project was to revise an orientation program entitled Nouveau Départ, to test and to evaluate the revised program. The program was changed by integrating 35 additional course hours to prepare the midlife Francophone homemaker more adequately for a career change.

Literature related to transitions, with a focus on women's midlife and re-entry transitions, was reviewed. The issues confronting many women in their middle years and causing stress were described. The many variables affecting the ease of adaptation to re-entry transition were identified. Programs and resources available to women in the process of reorienting themselves were also reviewed.

The re-entry model was developed based on Brooks' (1978), Hopson and Adams' (1981) transition process models; it also integrated crisis, grief and developmental theories. This model was used in the evaluation of the original program and served as a framework in the development of the revised course design and content. The new content consisted of input on the re-entry transition process, assertiveness training, starting a small enterprise, information interviews, and problem solving.

The revised 80 hour program was offered at the St. Boniface College two days per week for eight weeks. The 21 francophone women enrolled in the program ranged in age from 24 to 60 years with the majority (N=16) between 40 to 55 years.

Twenty women completed the course and summative evaluation. The same evaluation was readministered 4 months later at a follow-up session.

A comparison of the evaluations revealed that most of the participants had been able to maintain positive changes in attitude and behavior four months after the program had ended. Also revealed was the ease of adaptation to re-entry and readiness for change were affected by many variables such as self confidence, education, the ability to make a commitment to a personal goal, family support, and urban versus rural living. Differences in styles of coping with change were observed and obstacles to re-entry were identified.

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A major shift for mothers approaching their forties is caused by the realization that their last children are entering kindergarten and/or the older children are leaving home for school or work. The crisis at this turning point centers around the necessity to develop alternatives to mothering that will offer new avenues for creativity and self-actualization. One alternative considered by more and more women is re-entry into the labour force (Holt, 1982; Meyer, 1976; Neugarten, 1979; Pearson, 1979; Status, 1980).

Over the past years, many programs have been developed because of a growing awareness of the needs of women for adequate preparation and support in making this transition from full time mother and homemaker to wage earner. For the Francophone clientele, "L'Orientation Professionnelle de la Femme" (1977) was developed in New Brunswick. In Ottawa, "Retour au travail" (1980) made its appearance in 1974. In Québec, "Nouveau Départ" was introduced in 1977, followed by "Transition au travail", "L'Enjeu", "Partance", "Jonathan" et "Orientation-Femme" (Charette, 1983) which were introduced in the 1980's.

One of these programs, Nouveau Départ (New Start) was introduced into Manitoba in the spring of 1984. The Société Franco-Manitobaine had invited the president of the Nouveau Départ Corporation to St. Boniface to discuss this program with representatives from the women's groups such as Pluri-Elles, Réseau and La Ligue Féminine Catholique. The need expressed by the Francophone women for this type

of orientation program convinced the St. Boniface Community College of its necessity. The director of St. Boniface Community College then asked the author to coordinate and direct the first course in the fall of 1984. A year later, the revision of the program to better meet the needs of Francophone midlife homemakers considering a career change became the subject of a master's practicum project.

### The Original Program of Nouveau Départ

Nouveau Départ is an orientation program. It was developed in 1977 by Monica Matte of Montreal for women of 35 to 55 years who have devoted many years to full time homemaking and who are considering a change. The 45 hour program consists of two half day sessions per week for six weeks. The first six sessions deal with introspection and cover the following themes: social changes, identifying personal needs, assessing abilities and limitations, understanding the physical and emotional implications of role-change, coping with failure and achieving autonomy. The second half of the course focuses on an exploration of the following options: employment, education, volunteer work and re-structuring of home life. In the twelfth session, the participants are helped to develop a plan of action, and they finish by evaluating the course.

Most sessions consist of mini-conferences, individual workshops and small group sharing and discussions. Each group consists of eight participants and is led by a facilitator. The groups remain the same throughout the course.

### Evaluation of the 1984 Program

The first program was offered to 22 Francophone women from November 6 to December 13, 1984. The participants evaluated the program by answering a general questionnaire. The group leaders and the coordinator based their evaluation on their classroom observations and on the participants' feedback comments and achievements at the end of the course.

Dissatisfaction with length and content led to re-assessment of the program. Forty-five hours did not allow participants enough time to assimilate all of the material. Too little time was devoted to the exploration of the labour market and the development of a plan of action. Very few participants had actually developed, by the end of the course, a definite plan of action or had set definite goals. Many participants had felt rushed throughout the program and had not been able to assimilate all of the material presented in the sessions.

A major problem encountered in generating and exploring alternatives was a lack of self-confidence. The participants had a tendency to downgrade their many accomplishments in family enterprises and community organizations, and had difficulty speaking about themselves in a positive way. There was a need for assertiveness training and confidence building.

The participants also lacked an understanding of the process of transition that occurs when dealing with loss of roles, the search for self and the search for a sense of fulfillment. The transition from full-time mother and homemaker to the new and unfamiliar role of wage earner is seldom easy. As reported by Rubin (1979) and confirmed

by the participants of Nouveau Départ, the transition may be accompanied by feelings of anxiety, fear of failing, despair of not knowing what to try and guilt over changing roles.

### Proposed Revisions

After reviewing the literature that existed on the subject of transitions, and midlife career change, a model of the re-entry time to assimilate all of the material. Too little time was devoted to transition process was developed and used to assess what changes needed to be made to improve the program.

The following revisions were proposed:

1. The development of a presentation and workshop on the re-entry transition process to help participants understand the experience of change and to give them a sense of control in determining their goals and in monitoring their own process.
2. The development of an assertiveness training segment to build self-confidence and to develop assertive skills in coping with new situations (e.g., job interviews, enrollment for a course, etc.)
3. Additional content devoted to the exploration of paid employment as an option to reduce the participants' anxieties in regards to this option and to give them a greater awareness of community resources and employers' expectations.
4. The exploration of a fifth option - starting a small

- business - to discuss an alternative which makes use of management skills and individual talents.
5. The development of a mini workshop on family involvement in the process of change - to discuss and role play ways of coping with resistance.
  6. The development of a workshop on the problem solving and decision making processes to teach participants an effective way of analysing a problem situation, of generating possible solutions and of reaching a decision that respects needs and values.
  7. The development of a longer workshop on effective short-term and long-term planning with opportunities for individual work, sharing and feedback.

### The Intent of the Practicum Report

In this report, some of the literature that relates to the subject of midlife and transition theory will be reviewed. The transition process model that had been used as a framework for the evaluation and revision of the program will be explained. How the proposed revisions were translated into course content and integrated into the original design will be described. The participants' evaluation of the revised program given at the mid-point, at the end and as a result of a four-month follow-up will be reported. The author will also present her own evaluation and recommendations.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

A transition is defined by Brammer and Abrego (1981) and by Keleman (1974) as a turning point or a discontinuity in a person's life that involves the surrender of old boundaries and the formation of new ones. Schlossberg (1981, 1984) offers a broader definition. She states that a transition is any event or movement that alters the individual's perception of self and of the world and "results in change in relationships, routines, assumptions, and/or roles within the settings of self, work, family, health and/or economics" (p. 43). According to many authors, an event cannot be labelled a transition unless it is so perceived by the individual; it is its impact on the individual's daily life that is important to consider (Golan, 1978; Rubin, 1979; Schlossberg, 1981, 1984; Stringer-Moore, 1981).

Two events that have an impact on a woman's daily life and that are identified in the literature as transition points are reaching the middle years and re-entering school or the wage sector.

### The Middle Years - A Turning Point

Midlife, a new transition unknown to earlier generations, has arisen due to the increasing life span and decreasing number of years spent in bearing and rearing children (Rubin, 1979; Status, 1980). It is described as a time to re-evaluate and re-define personal priorities and goals (King & Marvel, 1982; Robertson, 1978). Menopause, acquiring of some opposite-sex characteristics and a renewed interest in events and people outside the immediate family are frequently

associated with it (Colarusso & Nemiroff, 1981; Holt, 1982; King & Marvel, 1982; Robertson, 1978; Van Hoose & Worth, 1982).

Sheehy (1976) and Mogul (1979) tie midlife to chronological age. Based on her interviews of 115 men and women, Sheehy (1976) states that the middle years for women begin at 35 with the entry of the last child in school. Mogul (1979) states that the middle years start with the 30's. Rubin (1979) ties midlife not to age but to a phase in the life cycle of the family when the children are grown and gone, or nearly so, and when for the first time in her adult life, a woman can attend to her own needs and development as a separate and autonomous being. The 160 women in Rubin's study ranged in age from 35 to 54 and were experiencing the same transition. This supports Neugarten's (1979) theory of variability in adult development and her statement that the trend points towards a fluid life cycle and an age irrelevant society.

### **The Current Generation of Midlife Women**

According to Junge and Maya (1985), the current generation of midlife women is a unique group in that they have had to cope with the integration of conflicting demands and expectations between traditional roles and liberated roles. They grew up when most women defined themselves through their husbands and families. They were educated into a traditional role that limited their horizons and generated self doubts (Gilligan, 1982; Knapp, 1981; Lutter, 1982; Status, 1980). During the sixties, they were the wives and mothers who were jolted by the emerging options of the Women's Liberation Movement. Now in the



eighties, they face conflicts which future generations will not experience since today's young women are being prepared to become economically self-sufficient and to play a much broader role in society (Status, 1980; Junge & Maya, 1985). Junge and Maya (1985) suggest that today's midlife women are social pioneers since they face retirement from motherwork with no socially-designated script to follow in planning the second half of their lives. They will serve as role models for the next generation of midlife women.

Contrary to the preparation for adolescence provided for young people, many women are ill-prepared for the changes of midlife and their responses to change are based on misinformation and myths regarding menopause, aging and opposite-sex characteristics (Holt, 1982).

### **Psychological Issues of the Middle Years Affecting Re-entry Women**

There is evidence that a range of complex issues exist for midlife women as they contemplate changing their lifestyles (Meyer & Owen, 1976; Schlossberg, 1984; Status, 1980). These issues and their eventual resolution have an impact on the homemaker's ability to cope with re-entry.

#### **. Finding a New Source of Fulfillment**

One of the serious problems confronting married midlife women described in the literature is finding something meaningful to do after their children grow up (Holt, 1982; Mogul, 1979; Rubin, 1979). The difficulty stems from having to

shift from primary focusing on significant others to focusing on more personal needs. The midlife woman needs to reconcile past experiences and socialization with newly emerging values, attitudes and opportunities (Goodman, 1979; Lutter, 1982; Meyer & Owen, 1976; Mogul, 1979; Rubin, 1979). This conflict is evident in a two year study conducted by Lutter (1982) at the University of Minnesota involving 1,100 women of 25 to 60 years who had taken at least one continuing education course. The study focused on the lives of women who were between the ages of 37 and 45 (N = 212). It was found that the average student in Continuing Education for Women was a 42 year old woman who already possessed a bachelor's degree. The study found that the women aged 37 to 45 experienced a great deal of dissonance between old expectations and new desires. Frustrations and problems arose because they had rarely placed personal desires first. More than any other group these women were torn between what they "should do or be" according to tradition and what they "could do or be" in the liberated modern sense.

• **Gender Reversal**

Evidence also suggests a major shift and gender reversal during midlife transition (Colarusso & Nemiroff, 1981; Gilligan, 1980; Holt, 1982; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson & McKee, 1979; Lowenthal, Thurnher, & Chiriboga, 1975; Neugarten, 1979; Robertson, 1978; Van Hoose & Worth, 1982). Neugarten (1979) cites the studies on aging in different societies conducted by Gutmann. The latter proposes a trajectory of change

in which men move from active to passive modes and women move in the opposite direction toward increased assertiveness. A tentative explanation proposed by Neugarten for this movement in opposite direction is that motherhood requires that women suppress their aggressive impulses to succeed in child care and that men suppress their affiliative impulses to succeed as economic providers. Once children are grown and the demands of motherhood are over, the suppressed elements of personality can be expressed - thus, men and women move in the opposite directions and both move towards androgyny. This shift can create problems in the marital relationship for as wives begin to desire achievement in the outside world, husbands look forward to their retirement and an increased involvement with the family. Gutmann (1975, cited in Neugarten, 1979) who investigated gender reversal in several studies found evidence that women who resist their own emerging assertiveness and "masculine" qualities may experience depression, guilt and low self-esteem.

• **The Search for Self**

As children leave home, women find themselves in a renewed search for a separate identity, for individuation and the attainment of a sense of independence (Junge & Maya, 1985; Mogul, 1979; Rubin, 1979; Van Hoose & Worth, 1982). This is the recycling of the unfinished developmental task of adolescence (Erikson, 1963). According to Levinson et al. (1978) adults who have never resolved this task of achieving

identity would most likely experience a period of great turmoil in midlife. The neglected parts of the self seek expression at this time (Colorasoo & Nemuroff, 1981; Levinson et al., 1978; Perosa & Perosa, 1983; Rubin, 1979). The crisis is precipitated by the loss of roles and is marked by inner questioning. Lutter (1982) and Rubin (1979) found that midlife women whose children no longer made great demands on their time were asking themselves "What am I going to do with the rest of my life?" (Lutter, 1982, p. 5; Rubin, 1979, p. 123). This question is part of a more fundamental question, Who am I now that I'm no longer a full-time mother and housewife?

The problems involved. The issue of identity is not easy to resolve because it requires difficult shifts for the midlife women. Many authors look to the socialization process to explain this difficulty (Goodman, 1979; Gilligan, 1982; Knapp, 1981; Levine, 1983a, 1983b; Lutter, 1982; Meyer & Owen, 1976; Nichols, 1985; Rich, 1976; Rubin, 1979; Schlossberg, 1984; Stringer-Moore, 1981; Van Hoose & Worth, 1982). Taking initiative in changing or expanding their lives is particularly difficult for women who have been taught dependence and passivity. After decades of submerging their own needs and aspirations in the "patriarchal institution of motherhood" (Rich, 1976; Levine, 1983b), of defining themselves in terms of their husband and children, and of being psychologically and financially dependent, it is no easy task for them to start caring for themselves and to strive for growth and independence.

Increased autonomy may create feelings of guilt about rejecting and neglecting their husband and children. The emergence of new feelings and needs often arouses fears - fear of the unknown, fear of change, fear of loss, or fear of a new sense of power (Rubin, 1979). According to Sheehy (1976) and Goodman (1979) the conflict is between security and autonomy. The fundamental question becomes: How can I find my identity and independence without disrupting my marriage and family life?

Defining the self through one's work. In her research, Gilligan (1982) identified a judgmental bias that assumes that the male model of defining the self through one's work is superior to the female model of defining the self through relationships and attachments. The male model is viewed as more adaptive and fitting the requirements for success in the business world.

As well, Bardwick (1975) states that an image persists that creativity, autonomy and competence cannot develop within the traditional role of the homemaker. She reports on a study by Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Rosenkrantz and Clarkson who set out to study the relationship between a woman's sense of competence and the number of children she had. It was assumed in this study that competent women would describe themselves in terms of their occupation, would be non-traditional and have fewer children. The researchers found that their assumption was not true and that competence could be developed in the traditional female roles as well as masculine roles.

Bardwick states that the women who manage to develop self esteem and competence in the roles of wife and mother believe that their responsibilities are important and that their work holds the potential for creativity as well as drudgery. In reality, women's traditional commitments hold at least as much potential and challenge as ordinary jobs and some careers. However, because motherwork is defined as women's work, it is held in lower esteem. It is diminished by the widely held male view that assumes that staying at home and raising children is really not very difficult (Lutter, 1982).

Women discover the actual value society places on homemaking and motherhood when employers refuse to consider the years in the home as work experience, and when social security (and Canada Pension Plan) records show "zero" for each year they've invested in nurturing and serving the family (Status, 1980).

Women have been so conditioned to accept the male model as superior that many have difficulty giving value to their work lives as mothers and wives (Bardwick, 1975; Lutter, 1972; Rubin, 1979). As a result, many women discount their competence and success in their role if it is not within paid employment.

#### • **Depression**

Depression in midlife women has been associated to the empty-nest syndrome based on research done on hospitalized patients (Rubin, 1979). However, many authors report that

children leaving home is not the source of depression in most women. In her interviews, Rubin discovered that women faced the "empty nest" with a decided sense of relief and anticipation. Junge and Maya (1985) reported a similar finding in their study of 20 educated, middle to upper middle class women of 41 to 49 years. In half of the sample, children were grown and had left home and the women expressed pleasure at their leaving home. In the other half, the women looked forward to their children's leaving but at the same time feared failure in pursuing a career.

Longitudinal data in the Lowenthal, Thurnher and Chiriboga study (1975) indicate that both men and women look forward to the departure of the children as an event which would improve marital relations. A recurrent theme in the discussions of the middle aged subjects was the disruptive influence of the teenage children.

Van Hoose and Worth (1982) suggest that depression can arise during midlife due to many factors: role change, marital discord, financial worries, aging, a sense of loss of time, the realization of one's mortality, the death of a parent, coping with aging parents, disappointment in children, and/or failure to attain personal aspirations.

Stringer-Moore (1981) states that a woman who reaches the middle years following years of caring for others and ignoring her own needs may experience intense anger, confusion or depression. The refusal of the significant others in her

life to validate her needs for role change may also result in feelings of helplessness and depression.

- **Adjusting to Aging**

Although middle-aged men may still be seen as attractive and sexual, prevailing sociocultural views equate female sexual desirability with a youthful body. Consequently, many middle-aged women experience prolonged preoccupation with the physical signs of aging (Colarusso & Nemiroff, 1981). Their preoccupation stems from a fear of losing love and sex appeal. The extent to which a woman's personal identity is attached to body image would determine her reaction to the natural physical changes. New attention is also given to body monitoring as the body becomes less predictable (Neugarten, 1979). Resolution requires the acceptance and adjustment to physiological changes.

- **The Care of Aging Parents**

Neugarten (1979) and Robertson (1978) state that the care of the aging parent is becoming the major source of life stress at midlife. This task occurs at about the time that midlife women are beginning to free themselves from parenting responsibilities and are looking forward to spending time on themselves.



• **Other Issues**

Neugarten (1979) suggests three additional issues:

- (1) the need to quickly establish an intimate relationship with a stranger when a son or daughter-in-law appears.
- (2) the need to adjust to a child's divorce.
- (3) the adaptation to the role of grandparent which brings a new awareness of aging and a new source of gratification.

Stringer-Moore (1981) adds that midlife brings new responsibilities for the woman who loses her spouse through death or divorce. She finds herself coping with a wide variety of demands, and must learn to ask for help and to set limits for herself and others. She may also find herself dating for the first time in years.

Much is happening in midlife within the physical and emotional self, within the marriage relationship and with the children who are also in the process of individuating. It is within this context of stress that re-entry occurs.

**The Resolution of Midlife Conflicts**

Erikson (1963) proposes generativity as the developmental task in adulthood. Sheehy (1976) questions this theory in reference to women since nurturing, teaching and serving others is what most women have been involved with during the first half of their life cycle. She

states that women are forced to redirect their energies when they lose their powers of procreation and submits that if a struggle for men in midlife is generativity versus self-absorption, the comparable task for women is to transcend dependency. Mogul (1979) summarizes the psychological task of the middle years as the "testing and making room for new identities and new self-perceptions without entirely discarding old ones that had offered gratifications and grounds for previous self-regard" (p. 1140).

Jakubowski (1978) and Stringer-Moore (1981) propose the use of assertiveness training (AT) to help women resolve conflicts at midlife. They suggest that AT helps women resocialize their attitudes about themselves and their appropriate roles, and helps them develop new behavioral responses and personal options.

Many homemakers choose re-entry into the wage sector as a way to satisfy their needs for identity, involvement and autonomy. For a growing number of women, economic necessity is the primary catalyst (Pearson, 1979). Volunteer work, vocational training and part-time work are often used as vehicles for eventual return to full-time employment according to Pearson (1979). She adds that some women gain entry via the job creation and employment assistance programs sponsored by the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission.

The value of paid employment as an option was recognized in a study by Coleman and Antonucci in 1981. Their goal was to examine the impact of employment status on the self-esteem, the psychological well-being and the physical health of women at midlife. Two hundred six employed women and 183 homemakers were compared on a number of scales of well-being. The results indicated that employed women at

midlife had higher self-esteem and less psychological anxiety than homemakers. Employed women also reported better health. The findings suggest that paid work may be a stabilizing force for women during critical transitions. This was supported earlier by Nathanson (1975) and Mogul (1979) who claim that of any variable investigated, employment had the most positive effects on women's health. Women who worked outside the home reported less anxiety and less psychotropic drug use.

The witnesses and contributors at the hearings of the congressional study on the Status of Midlife Women (Status, 1980) also identified education and jobs as key options. Jobs spelled livelihood, economic security, and the means by which each individual could exercise, test and stretch personal abilities and skills. A personal paycheque could also become a passport to equality in a marital relationship.

In addition to re-entry, Robertson (1978) reports the following choices that are made by homemakers. Some women revive or intensify old and new interests and talents, some remain the same by choice, others stagnate - that is, they remain the same without making a conscious choice, and some become acutely or chronically depressed and dependent on their spouse and families.

### **The Process of Adaptation to a Transition**

Adaptation to transition is a complicated process during which a person moves from being totally preoccupied with the transition to incorporating the transition into her or his life (Schlossberg, 1981).

Moos and Tsu (1976, cited by Schlossberg, 1981) have identified two phases in the process of adaptation: an acute phase in which energy is focused on lowering stress, and a reorganization phase in which the new reality is faced and accepted and the individual returns to normal functioning.

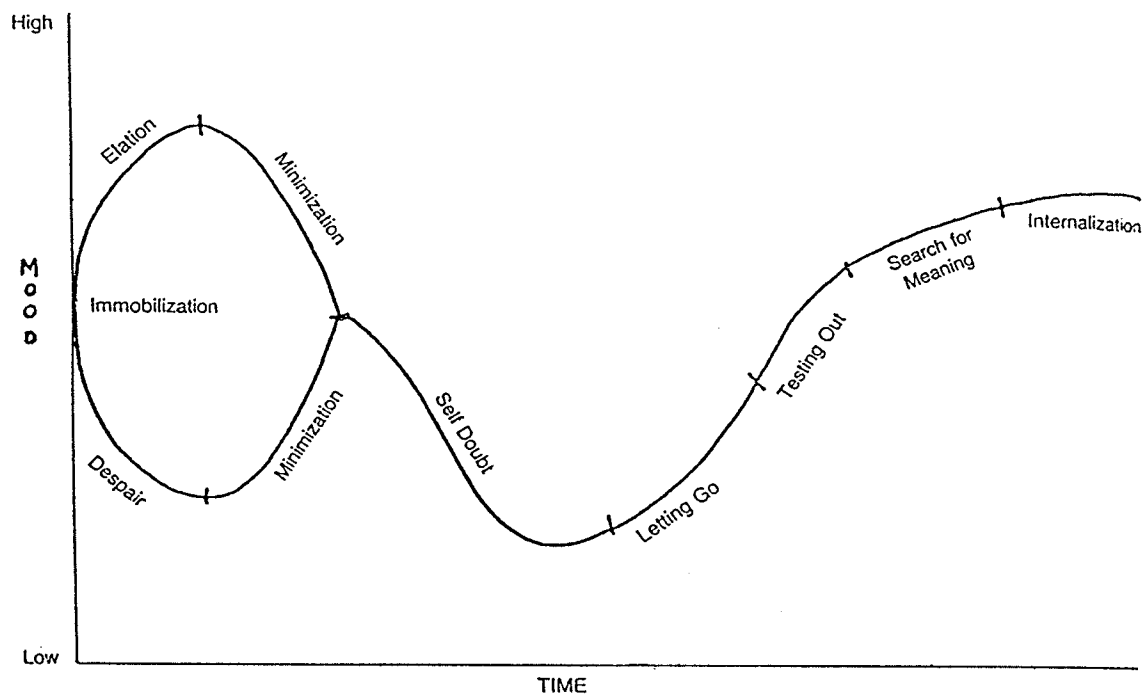
Naomi Golan (1978) describes the process as a movement from equilibrium to disequilibrium and back again. She suggests that each person responds to the triggering event in his/her own way depending on his/her perception of it. The event may be perceived as a threat to a personal sense of integrity or autonomy. It may be perceived as a loss of a person or ability or it may be felt as a challenge to survival, growth, mastery and self-expression. Thus, individuals can respond to the same transition in very different ways.

Since self-chosen and involuntary transitions involve some form of loss or threat, many authors include phases of grief and mourning in the process of transition (Brammer & Abrego, 1981; Hopson, 1981; Keleman, 1974; Perosa & Perosa, 1983). Keleman illustrates the process with a formative loop. On the descending side of the loop, loss takes place, new space is created and the emotional reactions to loss and to this empty space are experienced. The ascending side of the formative loop is where reorganization occurs, new excitement is sensed, new possibilities are organized and new boundaries are formed. Hill (1965, cited by Schlossberg, 1981) believes that the process takes the shape of a roller-coaster: the triggering event occurs, the individual dips down into a period of disequilibrium and gradually rises up again and levels off into a period of reorganization.

Figure 1

### Seven-Phase Model of Stages Accompanying Transition

From "Response to the papers by Schlossberg, Brammer and Abrego" by B. Hopson, 1981, *The Counseling Psychologist*, 9(2), p. 38. Copyright 1981 by the Division of Counseling Psychology of The American Psychological Association. Reprinted by permission.



Hopson (1981) and Adams developed a seven-stage transition process model that takes a similar roller coaster shape (see Figure 1). Brammer and Abrego (1981) have used this model and found it applicable to most transitions. According to this model, the individual first experiences **shock and immobilization** to varying degrees depending on the impact of the transition. This first stage is attached to a range of feelings from elation to despair depending on whether the

transition is desired or undesired. Then follows either a period of **denial** which offers relief from suffering or a period of **minimization** of the good feelings as the good news is tested against reality. The third stage is a period of **self-doubt** unleashing sadness, depression, anger and anxiety. **Letting go** occurs once the negative feelings and old expectations have been recognized and dealt with. This stage involves a letting go of resistance to change and an acceptance to flow with the experience. During the final three stages of **testing out**, **searching for meaning** and **internalizing**, an upswing in mood and self-esteem takes place as options are explored and new values are integrated.

This process was tested out by Perosa & Perosa (1983) in a study of 134 people (65 males and 69 females) ranging in age from 26 to 59 who were facing a midcareer crisis. Forty-six participants had voluntarily changed careers, 43 were in the process of changing and 45 wanted a change but were persisting in their present jobs.

A structured interview was used to obtain information from all participants about their mid-career transition. The questions were designed to fit each phase of the Hopson and Adams' stages of transition. Perosa and Perosa found that the participants experienced an overlap of stages two through seven. None had experienced the first stage of shock and immobilization - probably because these were voluntary career changers. The persistors had not yet "let go". The search for self was a common theme and was reflected in the participants' search for a new career that would allow them to express whatever parts of the self had been lost or sacrificed in the first

career (e.g. the ability to relate to people, to be autonomous, creative, etc.).

Perosa and Perosa concluded that Hopson and Adams' model could provide a framework for understanding the emotional factors involved in a voluntary career transition.

### A Re-Entry Transition Process Model

Only one model was found in reviewing the literature that dealt specifically with the career transition from homemaking to re-entry into the paid work force or school. Brooks (1978) proposes a two phase model.

The **preparation phase** is subdivided into three stages:

Stage 1 · Vague Discontent. Many women begin re-entry with a feeling of vague discontent about their present life that is experienced as boredom or depression. Brooks suggests that this discontent may occur as a result of dependency and a failure to develop an individual identity apart from the roles of wife and mother. For women who have been primarily vicarious achievers, the discontent may also stem from a need for new avenues for gaining a sense of achievement and fulfillment (Manis & Mochizuki, 1972; Brooks, 1978).

Stage 2 · Inner Preparation. The re-entry woman tentatively decides to become involved in new roles outside the home. She then faces many questions regarding what to do, where and how to get involved, what risks are involved, and how the family will react. Brooks quotes Matthews (1969) who states that stage 2 ends when the woman can say that she is ready to risk changing the pattern of her

family life. Matthews also points out that this stage cannot be fully resolved without actual experience in school or paid work.

Stage 3 • Intensive Family Involvement. The re-entry woman needs to share her plans with her family to prevent later conflicts. Brooks suggests family discussions revolving around the plans and motivation for re-entry, what kind of changes this may bring about in the home, etc...

The second phase of Brook's model is the **Decision Making Phase** and consists of four action oriented stages:

Stage 4 • Assessment. Re-entry women need to identify abilities and interests by the careful perusal of past and present activities.

Stage 5 • Generating Alternatives. Once interests and abilities have been assessed, she is ready to generate options. Brooks suggests that during this stage the women be encouraged to dream and fantasize. She states that they experience difficulties in generating alternatives because of a lack of self-confidence, low aspiration levels, and unfamiliarity with the labor market and training opportunities.

Stage 6 • Narrowing alternatives and value clarification. At this stage, the alternatives are evaluated and reduced by weighing them against life and work values. According to Brooks, inability to make decisions at this point may be due to dependency and unwillingness to take risks or to the lack of knowledge concerning the decision-making process. She stresses the importance of teaching the steps in decision-making.



Stage 7 • Implementation and goal setting. Some women enter this stage with a clear goal. Others have a broad sense of direction but need to engage in trial experiences such as auditing a course or doing part-time work. Continued support from peers and/or a counselor is essential at this point. Brooks suggests exposure to other women who have successfully combined homemaking with roles outside the home as a source of encouragement. She adds that some women may need further help with implementation such as preparing résumés, applying and interviewing for jobs, assertiveness and communication skills. Brooks also notes four special problems of re-entry women: low self-confidence, time management, role conflict and guilt.

#### The Variables Affecting the Outcome of Re-entry Transition

Individuals differ in their ability to adapt to transitions. The same person may respond differently to different types of transitions or even to the same type of transition occurring at different times in his/her life (Schlossberg, 1984). The ease of adaptation to a transition at any particular time of life depends on one's perceived and/or actual ratio of resources to deficits in terms of the characteristics of the transition, the pre-post environment and the individual's sense of competency, well-being and health (Schlossberg, 1981, 1984; Lowenthal et al., 1975).

Golan (1978) and Schlossberg (1984) state that an individual's ability to process a transition cannot be observed over a short time span. Reactions and the ratio of resources to deficits can

change over time and the individual's perspective can shift from a feeling of despair to one of hope. Also, the more a transition alters a person's life, the more coping resources it requires and the longer it takes for assimilation and adaptation.

Thus, re-entry transition can take months or years to process depending on the following variables related to the characteristics of the transition, of the pre-post transition environment, and of the individual.

### **The Characteristics of the Transition**

Schlossberg (1981, 1984) identifies the following characteristics which influence the coping process:

1. Trigger: What has triggered re-entry? Widowhood? Divorce? The departure of the children from home? Identity crisis?
2. Timing: Is the transition "on-time" or "off-time" according to the social clock (Neugarten, 1979)?
3. Source: Does re-entry occur as a result of a personal decision (internal control) or is it imposed by other people or circumstances (external control)?
4. Role change: Does the transition involve the gain or loss of roles?
5. Duration: Is the transition of permanent, temporary or uncertain duration?
6. Affect: Does re-entry generate more positive or more negative feelings?

7. Onset: Is re-entry gradual or sudden? Expected or unexpected?
8. Previous experience with a similar transition: How successful was the adaptation to earlier similar transitions?
9. Concurrent stress: what and how great are the stresses?

### **The Characteristics of Pretransition and Posttransition Environment**

Three aspects of the environment that affect adaptation to a transition are: interpersonal support systems (Brammer & Abrego, 1981; Brooks, 1976; George, 1980; Rice, 1982; Schlossberg, 1984), institutional supports (Brammer & Abrego, 1981; Brooks, 1978; Robertson, 1978; Schlossberg, 1984; Status, 1980) and physical setting (Schlossberg, 1984).

#### Interpersonal Support Systems

The intimate dyadic relationship, the family unit and the network of friends are three systems that provide the necessary resources during re-entry. Schlossberg (1981, 1984) identifies emotional and attitudinal support such as trust, understanding, the sharing of confidences, the sense of belonging and of being valued. Robertson (1978) adds spiritual, psychic or intellectual support and physical sustenance. For re-entry women, behavioral support is also very important.

The individual undergoing re-entry must be able to clarify what kind of support is needed, and must be able to communicate this need clearly. Rice (1982) points out the importance of

performing this task. In a study of women who were in educational transition, Rice found that support was defined differently by men and women. Some men defined support as not actively opposing their wives' returning to school. For others it meant giving their wives permission to take on additional responsibilities. Women, however, defined support more in behavioral terms. They expected their husband to provide functional support such as helping with housework and childcare.

In a previous study of 60 women re-entering school, Rice (1979) devised an instrument to measure support. Instrumental support was assessed by the degree of role sharing in household tasks, childcare and social responsibilities. Emotional support was defined by the degree of encouragement, praise, problem solving by the spouse, and the willingness to make time and economic accommodations. Three quarters of the sample of women rated themselves as their most important support. Second place was given to husbands and third place either to husband, children or friends. The women reported high overall emotional support - with very few changes in the sharing of domestic tasks.

People often expect a few family members and friends to provide all of their support. Brammer & Abrego (1981) urge the participants in their transition workshops to expand their social networks to include a variety of people who can provide different forms of support including challenge and direct feedback.

Because midlife and older homemakers have made such a commitment to the family, the psychological support they receive from family members is crucial (Lutter, 1982). Rubin (1979) found

in her interviews with midlife women that their ability to make a serious commitment to a life outside the home was contingent on a husband's approval - especially in families where there was no financial urgency for a woman to work. The idea of testing out their intelligence, capabilities and strengths without this approval filled them with fear.

Rice (1982) also found that the more support a woman received from family, friends and advisors, the more likely she was to return to school, stay in school and enjoy the experience. Married re-entry women with supportive spouses also indicated better goal direction and more feeling of excitement and satisfaction. According to Brown, Bhrolchain and Harris (1975), for women under stress, the most powerful mitigator is a confidante.

Many midlife women experience resistance from their children and from their husbands when they attempt re-entry. Children's resistance may stem from their conservative attitude regarding sex roles (Bardwick, 1979) and from their resentment as mothers focus more of their emotional energy towards their studies or outside job. Bardwick (1979) and Goodman (1979) agree that at the root of men's resistance to women's role change are conscious fears that new demands will be made on them or that they will lose support, and less conscious anxieties that the changes demanded by their wives have as much to do with their own inadequacy as husbands as with their wives' ambitions. Family resistance contributes to the role strain and the guilt that are identified as two major

problems of re-entry by Brooks (1978), Pearson (1979), and Rice (1982).

### Institutional Supports

Institutional supports are occupational organizations, religious institutions and other community support groups to which an individual can turn for help (Schlossberg, 1981, 1984; Robertson, 1978).

Formal socialization programs organized by various institutions have existed for many years for role gains such as marriage and parenthood (George, 1980). During the last decade, many programs have been organized to unite people who are experiencing similar role losses. For midlife women, some programs are now offered to help them cope with retirement from motherwork and re-entry.

Brooks (1978), Brammer and Abrego (1981), Chamberland (1983), Knapp (1981), Levine (1983) and Sullivan (1983) promote the use of group work for women coping with transitions. Group work helps strengthen the bonds between women and increase their sense of personal power and support. It offers validation of experiences and perception. It brings awareness that the situation one faces is not unique phenomena but is often directly related to larger, social, cultural and economic conditions. In small groups, women can begin to solve problems cooperatively and help each other move towards action.

Counselling services for women are important resources and are recommended in the congressional report on the status of

mid-life women (Status, 1980) and in the Canadian study by Pearson (1979). Unfortunately, services such as the Women's Employment Counselling Services and the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre are not accessible to rural women and many urban women ignore their existence.

As cited in Pearson's Canadian study (1979) and in the Congressional Committee report (Status, 1980), continuing education programs are valuable in building self confidence, providing a transition from the home to higher education and to the work force, and providing opportunities to assess skills, aptitudes and achievements. Continuing education programs are also recommended to provide knowledge about life cycle changes and to alleviate false notions about menopause, the empty nest syndrome and midlife transition (Holt, 1982; Robertson, 1978; Status, 1980). As Holt (1982) suggests, adults who have some intellectual understanding of the changes of midlife and menopause would experience less trauma than their peers who lacked such information.

As for advanced education and vocational needs, colleges and universities are criticized in the literature for their inflexibility displayed toward older part-time students with inconvenient hours, the poor sequencing of courses, the inaccessible location for some, and the lack of financial aid (Pearson, 1979; Status, 1980). Loans and scholarships for education and training are necessary because family education funds that are set aside for children do not cover rehabilitation for mothers. In the Congressional Committee report on the Status

of Midlife Women (1980) a recommendation is offered that is based on the GI bill in the U.S.A. It is suggested that homemakers, like war veterans, have served their country by nurturing and educating the future generation - the country's most valuable resource. In so doing, they have foregone opportunities for career advancement and career-oriented education in addition to remaining relatively isolated from the mainstream of society. Therefore, they could be recompensed in the same way as veterans who were given a stipend to cover tuition, fees, books and living expenses. Each dollar expended for veteran training returned from three to six dollars in the form of taxes paid. A similar readjustment bill for widows and displaced homemakers would likely provide an equivalent return.

#### Physical Setting

One factor that affects re-entry is urban versus rural living. According to Comfort (1981) rural women have more problems with re-entry. There are fewer opportunities for self-fulfillment in education or employment and there is less access to community resources in rural areas.

#### **The Characteristics of the Individual**

How well a person copes with a transition also depends on that person's psychological resources, personal characteristics and coping responses and skills (Brammer & Abrego, 1981; Schlossberg, 1981, 1984).



### Psychological Resources

Individuals facing re-entry will process the experience differently depending on their level of maturity or stage of ego development (Van Hoose & Worth, 1980; Symor, 1977; Schlossberg, 1981, 1984), their level of self-esteem and self-confidence (Brooks, 1978; Pearson, 1979), their role complexity, their level of commitment and their values (Bardwick, 1979; Hooper, 1978; Schlossberg, 1981, 1984; Sullivan, 1983).

Brooks (1978) and Pearson (1979) state that low self-confidence is a special problem of re-entry. The adult woman may be afraid that she cannot compete with younger students or with co-workers. She may lack confidence in her ability to learn new skills and to succeed. She may truly feel rusty. Her loss of confidence may be related to the trigger event, i.e. a divorce, her husband lost his job, etc.

Hooper (1979) studied the relationship between a woman's commitment to re-entry in school and the family's behavior with 24 volunteer, intact families. The assumption in this study was that if the individual was committed to her own growth and individuation, the family system would respond by reorganizing and accommodating to new demands. If the individual was in doubt, the family system would respond with dysfunctional behavior aimed at forcing her to return to her former roles. Hooper found a significant relationship between the woman's commitment to her goals and the type of family in which she functioned. Re-entry women from families in which there was agreement about roles and tasks (traditionally gender-based or equalitarian) were willing to

quit school if the family seemed upset or asked her to. However, re-entry women in families who were in conflict over roles and task division were less willing to quit school. Involvement in school was perceived as the precipitating factor in a power struggle to change the role division in the family system. Hooper found that when an adult student was committed to her own growth and to changing the system, conflict itself was energizing and could generate high academic performance partly through the mechanism of rebellion and the rejection of old roles.

The clarification of attitudes and values regarding woman's role is important in making a commitment to re-entry since one form of resistance to change, according to Bardwick (1979), Mogul (1979) and Sullivan (1983), is internal and stems from women having internalized the traditional norms. A homemaker may demand and want her husband's and children's attitudes and behaviors to change, but at an unconscious level neither expect nor desire what she is requesting, and thus sabotage her own plans.

This inner conflict affects many women and contributes to their sense of ambivalence towards personal goals. According to Goodman (1979), women who are ambivalent towards change fear having to relinquish old ideas and values, fear that the marriage will be disrupted and fear the unknown. These fears are increased by the pattern of dependency developed in the traditional passive homemaker role (Goodman, 1979; Status, 1980; Stringer-Moore, 1981). Gould (1981) suggests that one method that is adopted to avoid a proposed change when the fears are too great is to predict a catastrophe that is scheduled to occur as soon as one crosses

the old safe pattern of behavior. Thus a woman may predict that her marriage will end in divorce or that her husband will die if she goes back to paid work or if she develops her talent. According to Gould, the catastrophe prediction has the power to inhibit and control when it is operating because it overrides the logical and objective mind.

#### Personal Characteristics

Schlossberg (1984) identifies socio-economic status, sex, age, life stage and health as the personal characteristics that bear on a person's options.

King & Marvel (1982) found a positive correlation between the labor force participation of mature women and their educational achievement and marital status based on U.S. work force statistics; the separated, divorced, widowed and never married women of 45 to 54 and those with a high school education had a higher percentage of labor force participation.

Education is identified as a key factor by many authors; it widens an individual's horizons, increases the number of options, serves as a vehicle of entry into the paid labor force and serves as a resource to prevent social isolation, poverty and dependency (Comfort, 1981; Goodman, 1979; Lutter, 1982; Status, 1980). Comfort (1981) adds that being well educated facilitates the ability to play various roles and to consider a role change. She also found that the rural women who were more likely to be employed had a college degree and/or a supportive husband and an open attitude towards women's roles.

### Coping Responses and Skills

A person's ability to control the situation, control the meaning, and control the stress by using various strategies or skills will affect the ease of adaptation and the effectiveness of the transition (Brammer & Abrego, 1981; Schlossberg, 1981, 1984). Brammer & Abrego identify two beliefs that have an impact on how a person responds to transitions. First is the belief and acceptance that problem situations are a normal part of living, and second, the belief that each individual has the ability to cope effectively with these situations. They state that "when these beliefs are adopted, the individual gains an increased sense of self-control and self-esteem" (p. 26).

Brammer, Abrego (1981) and Schlossberg (1981, 1984) list several skills that are important in coping with change:

- (a) skills for assessing, developing and utilizing external support systems;
- (b) skills for identifying personal strengths, for developing positive self-regard attitudes, and for utilizing internal support systems;
- (c) skills for managing stress; and
- (d) skills for planning and implementing change.

Based on her experience with re-entry women, Brooks (1978) states that management of time is one of their primary difficulties. Many attempt to add the additional responsibilities of school or paid work to a full schedule of family, household and social activities. As a result, they start feeling overwhelmed and helpless to resolve the problem and quit school or quit their job. Brooks stresses the importance of teaching principles of planning ahead and of establishing priorities as ways of

controlling this situation. Part of the solution is also the ability to ask for help and to share the home management tasks.

### Coping Styles of Women in Career Transition

Individual characteristics such as level of maturity, self-esteem and decision-making ability, also determine a woman's coping style as stated by Brebner, Sundre (1982) and Ackerman (1984).

Brebner and Sundre (1982) identified four coping styles of women in career transition according to their willingness to take risks, their readiness to make decisions and their responsiveness to building self-esteem. The authors described each style and explained how each could benefit from group support in a career development program.

The decider is assertive and ready for change. She is goal oriented and has a strong need to take charge of her life. She understands herself and is ready to assess career information and to explore work environments. Group support helps her clarify career goals and employment strategies.

The explorer is sure of what she can do and of who she is but is not ready for change. She has a wait, look and see attitude. Group support helps her set priorities and goals and provides the necessary nudge she needs to act on her goal.

The dabblers is frightened almost to the point of inaction and lacks confidence. She is not ready to make decisions or take risks and is difficult to motivate. She needs to learn to trust the instructor and class members to benefit from group support.

The evader is non-assertive, feels stuck and lacks self-esteem. She is often defiant or angry. Group support is vital to generate even the smallest change. This woman may need personal counselling before she can take action.

Brebner and Sundre believe that self-esteem is basic to the career development process and that as self-esteem grows, women move from one group to the next and their readiness to take risks and to make decisions grows.

In a study with 71 women, aged 30 to 62 who had previously been homemakers and had changed jobs within a three-year interval, Ackerman (1984) identified four coping styles: Creators, Maintainers, Conventionalists and Reactors. Stress levels for life events, demographic characteristics, attitudes, personality factors, job-changing strategies, and perceived job and life outcomes of the women were analyzed. The four groups were matched for age, education, number of children, family roles and level of job satisfaction. Data analysis indicated that the groups experienced significantly different levels of stress and utilized statistically different coping styles.

Creators were efficacious problem solvers, and had more positive attitudes about life in general, and more of a sense of inner control in decision-making processes. They were systematic and realistic in planning for a change and tended to have more role supports and more financial resources.

Maintainers sought to maintain their past lifestyles as they responded to stress during transition. They had rather rigid values coupled with "other" directedness, sensed a lowered respect from others and endorsed the lowest level of stress.

The conventionalists tended to have strong family first priorities. They were more inflexible in their problem solving and would follow the lead of someone else rather than attempt to develop new strategies as did the creators.

Reactors tried to fulfill a "supermom" role as mothers and workers. They were other directed with family needs being most valued. They sought to change jobs in concrete and inflexible ways. They had negative self-views of job change, experienced the highest level of stress with much personal illness. Their lifestyles were described as chaotic, hectic and without short or long-term goals for themselves.

Overall, Ackerman's findings suggest awesome levels of stress among middle-aged women who are involved in job changes.

### Evaluating the Outcome of a Transition

Gould (1981) suggests three possible outcomes to a transition: (a) a person may grow, (b) a person may slip into a worse situation or (c) a person may just survive the discontinuity ending up in much the same place and situation. The outcome can have both positive and negative aspects for the same individual (Schlossberg, 1984).

The end of a transition is marked usually by a new life organization, a new identity, and by the realization that it has become part of one's history.

Coping is assessed as successful if the individual can pinpoint the gains resulting from the transition, no matter how undesired the triggering event may have been (Hopson, 1981).

Schlossberg (1984) bases the final evaluation on the answers to such questions as:

1. Can the individual reinvest and renew after the discontinuity of persons and activities that had given meaning to his or her life?
2. Can the individual now commit himself or herself to work, love, and play?

### The Description of Orientation Programs Available for Women

Three general orientation programs for adults are described in the literature.

1. **Search for Fulfillment** is an orientation program designed for adult women by Laura Manis and June Mochizuki (1972) of the Western Michigan University. In design, this program is similar to *Nouveau Départ*. The program has two major phases. The first phase aims to remove the psychological blocks that keep women from attempting a life change. It focuses on helping them to build trust, share their concerns, learn to communicate, build self-confidence, overcome dependency and take risks. The second phase is designed to give them an opportunity to assess reality, their own skills and abilities, and the options available to them in the community. The women explore four avenues: education, employment, volunteer work, and creative self-expression. Three types of activities used are small group interaction, testing and homework assignments. Each program has an average of thirty-six participants who function in small groups of six



led by two facilitators. Two weeks after the last group session, each woman is seen on an individual basis for a one-hour counselling interview to tie up loose ends. This program takes into consideration many of the issues that confront midlife women who are in the process of making a life decision.

2. Brammer and Abrego (1981) describe a life planning program designed to help participants clarify their values, priorities and goals. Life planning groups, composed of eight to ten participants and a trained counsellor, meet weekly over a six-week period.

Self-assessment strategies are used to assess the influences that have shaped a person's self image, to identify skills, specialized knowledge and abilities, to assess the current life situation, and to assess past achievements. Long and short-term goals are established for career, time allocations, friendships, and finances. As with Search for Fulfillment, the group process is considered important as group members provide support and peer consultation.

3. Knapp (1981) describes a career/life planning workshop that addresses the problem of resocialization of dependent women. The primary goal of the program is to help women learn to take control of the transitions in their lives. The small groups provide a safe setting and an atmosphere of acceptance for the discussion of topics such as societal attitudes and beliefs, loneliness and alienation, and realistic self-appraisal of motives and needs. However, only options and opportunities in the wage sector are explored. The course includes practical skills such as targeting and organizing a job-search strategy, making contacts, writing résumés and learning interviewing techniques. Knapp states that the program facilitates the self-concept

change from dependence to competence by helping women direct themselves and control their environment.

Sullivan (1983) designed a variety of learning experiences in an effort to overcome women's internal barriers to their career development. The activities are designed for a group of six to twelve persons and begin with some stimulus activities such as a film, a reading, or a paper and pencil activity. The groups are led by peer counselors. Examples of group activities are: charting a life span plan; values auction; the pros and cons of marriage, family, employment and their combination; the viewing and discussion of films related to career development and decision making. These activities could be incorporated into an orientation program.

Two authors have focused on creating specific tools to help homemakers assess their motherwork and volunteer experiences. Ruth Ekstrom (1981) of Princeton, New Jersey developed a workbook entitled **Project HAVE** (Homemaking and Volunteer Experience) **Skills**. The workbook is designed to help homemakers identify the job-relevant skills they have learned and to match those skills with paid jobs.

In Quebec, Marthe Sansregret (1985), andragogical counselor, has published documents and created a program on the recognition of experiential learning at the college or university level and in the paid work force. The adult learners who do not wish to spend time and money being taught something they already know are taught how to make a portfolio of their experiential learnings related to their education or work goals and how to request accreditation. Sansregret has worked closely with Ekstrom and has thoroughly investigated models developed in the United States (1983). She has published a student's, a

counsellor's and an administrator's guide for the planning of a portfolio. She has also published a course outline on portfolio development for colleges and universities and is now working on an assessor's guide. The parallel versions she has created in both French and English provide the Canadian women with an avenue for better recognition of their learning from homemaking, volunteer work and community service.

### Summary

Schlossberg (1984) defines a transition as an event that alters the individual's perception of self and of the world and "results in change in relationships, routines, assumptions, and/or roles within the settings of self, work, family, health and/or economics" (p. 43).

Based on this definition and the review of the literature, achieving re-entry during the middle years is a double transition that has great impact on a woman's daily life since it results in changes in all the settings. The self image changes as a woman recycles the unfinished task of achieving identity and as she takes on new roles. With the departure of the children from home change occurs in the work setting as her work in the home diminishes and she takes on new responsibilities in the wage sector. The family undergoes many transformations as children mature into adulthood and leave home, as she and her spouse identify new needs and goals, and as her aging parents require greater care. Aging may affect her health and her self image. Re-entry in school or in the wage sector produces major changes

in the family's economic situation as income and/or expenses increase. Thus, with all these changes, re-entry undertaken during the middle years can be very complex and stressful. The process of adapting to the transition involves grieving lost roles and reorganizing one's life to find new sources of fulfillment.

How well a woman copes with this transition depends on her perceived and/or actual ratio of resources to deficits. This ratio is affected by many variables such as her psychological resources (self-esteem, maturity, confidence), her skill level in dealing with change, her interpersonal support systems and the availability of educational and counselling resources in her area. These variables determine her style of coping with the problems, the decisions and the stress of a career change.

There is a growing awareness of the needs of women for adequate preparation and support in making the transition from full-time mother and home manager to wage earner. Programs, such as Search for Fulfillment, Project HAVE Skills, and Nouveau Départ, have been developed to meet these needs. As well, many studies published during the last 10 years were focused on the situation of re-entry women.

## THE RE-ENTRY PROCESS MODEL USED IN THE REVISED PROGRAM

Based on the review of the literature on the process of adaptation to a transition, a re-entry transition process model was developed using Keleman's (1974) formative loop as the framework (see Figure 2).

The model borrows from Hopson (1981) and Adams' transition process model and Brooks' (1978) re-entry process model, and integrates crisis (Golan, 1978) grief process (Keleman, 1974) and developmental theory (Levinson et al., 1978; Erikson, 1963).

Four major phases were identified: introspection, reorganization, decision making and action planning.

### **Phase I: Introspection**

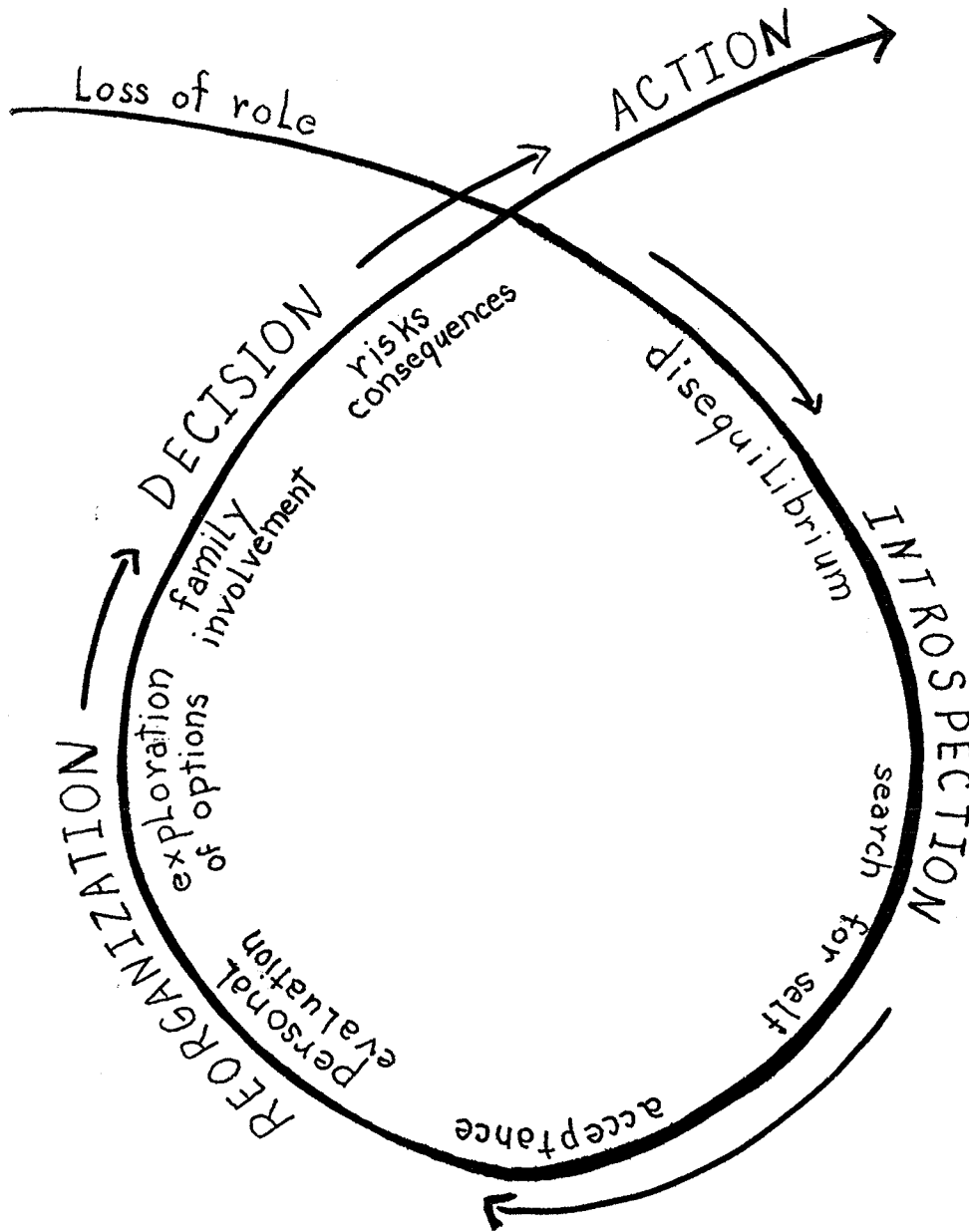
Introspection occurs on the descending side of the loop where emotional reactions to loss are experienced (Brooks, 1978; Hopson, 1981; Keleman, 1974). It is a passive, reflective phase and consists of three stages: a) disequilibrium (Brooks, 1978; Golan, 1978), b) a search for self (Erikson, 1963; Levinson, 1978; Junge & Maya, 1985; Lutter, 1982; Mogul, 1979; Rubin, 1979; Van Hoose & Worth, 1982), and c) acceptance (Hopson, 1981). The latter stage involves a letting go of resistance to change and an acceptance to flow with the experience.

### **Phase II: Reorganization**

Reorganization (Keleman, 1974; Moos & TSU, 1976 cited by Schlossberg, 1981) occurs on the ascending side of the formative loop where new possibilities are organized and new boundaries are formed.

FIGURE 2

A Process Model for Re-entry Transition



This phase is action oriented and consists of a series of tasks:

- a) personal assessment of abilities, interests, needs and limitations;
- b) the exploration of four options: re-entry into the paid labor force on a part-time or full-time basis or in their own business; re-entry in school; community volunteer work; restructuring their home life and developing specific talents.
- c) the involvement of the family in the plans for change to gain support and cooperation and prevent major conflicts.

### **Phase III: Decision-Making**

This is the point in the process when a decision has to be made in answer to the question "What shall I do with the rest of my life?" Alternatives have to be tested against needs, values, interests, and geographic, financial and educational limitations. The risks of change and no change have to be considered. If the client decides in favor of change, she will start working on an action plan to reach her goals. If she perceives change as too risky, she may become immobilized and resign herself to maintaining the status quo until another event or crisis creates disequilibrium (Perosa & Perosa, 1983).

Change can mean an internal change in attitude, changing a negative self-concept to a positive image, learning new assertive skills, or becoming more autonomous. Change can occur in all the environments of self, home, school, community and labor force.

#### **Phase IV: Action Plan**

Once a decision is made and goals are established, formulating an action plan is essential in helping a client achieve her goals. It means establishing short-term and long-term goals and objectives within a time frame. The homemaker needs to identify those responsibilities and activities of her present role that will have to be modified, shared or completely given up in order to achieve her new goals.

The stages are not necessarily sequential or clear cut. The total process can take a few months to many years depending on the ratio of resources to deficits in terms of the triggering event, the support systems, the individual's psychological resources, coping responses and skills.

This process model provided a framework in developing the course revisions which are described in the following section.



## METHOD

### The Course Revisions

In this section the presentations and exercises that were selected or designed to meet the goals of the proposed revisions will be described. The revised and original program designs are summarized and compared in Appendix B. A detailed course outline can be found in Appendix C.

#### Revision 1

##### To Develop a Presentation on the Re-entry Transition Process.

The transition process model was first presented at the introductory session; it served as a framework to describe the course content and show its progression from introspection to planning action during the sixteen sessions. It also served as the basis for a discussion of changes being experienced in the here and now in the participants' new role as students: changes in daily routine, adjusting to longer periods of sitting, orienting themselves to a new environment, meeting new people, reorganizing the early morning routine in the home to be on time, delegating tasks to family members, fear of the unknown, excitement of doing something new, anxiety, shyness, etc. These changes were examined as part of a process of transition.

At the second session, to better understand the present context of their lives and the sources of stress at midlife, we took a global look at all the gains, losses and stresses that occur in the family, in the self and in the couple relationship. The original

program examined social changes. In the revised program a visual presentation of the family life cycle was included with a focus on the changes in the use of time and space, the developmental tasks, stress on the couple relationship, stress and changes in the parent-child relationship and changes in the demands made on the homemaker-mother-wife at each stage. The participants were asked to identify their family life stage and to identify possible transitions being processed by themselves, their spouses and their children. Following this individual exercise, they shared what they wished of their family context in dyads.

Nola Symor's tricycle theory (1976) was presented to explain the self and intrapersonal transition. Symor illustrates the inner self as three balancing wheels: the "task" wheel which gives direction and goals to one's life; the "I" wheel which focuses on the inner self, personal needs and self concept; and the "group" wheel which focuses on relationships with other family members and friends. The loss of an active role, such as children leaving home, is compared to losing the front "task" wheel and going around in circles. The inner search for self that occurs at a transition point when roles are lost was discussed (Junge & Maya, 1985; Mogul, 1979; Rubin, 1979; Sheehy, 1976; Van Hoose & Worth, 1982).

Following this presentation the participants were given the task of illustrating their tricycle in order to become more aware of their perception of the general condition of their "I", "group" and "task" wheels and to reflect the changes that were occurring at this point in their lives.

The morning of the seventh session was devoted to the topic of transitions - taking stock of the many normal life transitions, the unexpected transitions and the non-transitions that humans experience. To understand a person's process of change, participants were asked to recall a past transition experience and were guided in thinking it through to identify the triggering event, the feelings, behaviors and thoughts at various stages. Participants identified their sources of personal strength, the actions taken and support systems that had helped them to accept and reorganize their lives. Data from their experiences was compiled in a plenary session and structured into the different stages of the process. The re-entry transition process model was then discussed in detail and the session ended with a debriefing period in subgroups.

Four focal questions during the debriefing period were:

how did you experience the recall exercise?

what did you learn about yourself?

what did you learn about transitions?

what learnings apply to your present  
situation?

## Revision 2

### The Development of an Assertiveness Training Segment.

The goal in developing a segment on assertiveness training was to increase the participant's self confidence, her ability to speak about herself in a positive way, her understanding of assertive versus aggressive and non-assertive behavior and to develop assertive skills in coping with new situations.

Confidence building exercises were integrated throughout the course. At the introductory session, additional time was allotted in order to establish a relaxed atmosphere and to allow participants to get to know each other. Icebreaker exercises such as the "four-corner name tag" were used to encourage participants to talk about themselves. At the beginning of the first eight sessions, participants were asked to greet two or three other members and to share with each an experience, an opinion or a feeling: (e.g., "Talk about the first paid job you ever had;" "Share an experience that occurred during the last few days that gave you joy.")

Another confidence exercise that was built into the revised program was to pick a spokesperson from each subgroup to report at the plenary sessions.

During the sixth session, five hours of course time was devoted to assertiveness training. The program focused on using "I" language, on learning how to give and receive a compliment in an assertive way, on how to give and receive feedback, on distinguishing between observation, opinion and feelings in communications, and on understanding the difference between aggressive, assertive and non-assertive behavior (Chalvin, 1980; Jakubowski, 1978; Jakubowski & Lange, 1976).

Speaking about self in a positive way was reinforced during the job interview role plays, in practising the answering of general interview questions (e.g., "Tell me about yourself."), in the writing of résumés, and in doing the information interviews.

Revision 3To Develop Additional Content for a More Adequate Exploration of the Employment Option.

- a) The exploration of the option of paid work was started by the viewing of a video film entitled "çoute que çoute" on the afternoon of day 7. This film presented the views of different women regarding their work as mother, seamstress, store owner, farm worker. Economic issues affecting women were raised: low wages, unrecognized motherwork and farm work, problems with getting bank loans and the relationship between gaining financial independence and achieving autonomy.
- b) A tour was organized of the St. Boniface Employment Counselling Centre and the Women's Employment Counselling Centre to familiarize the women with these two community resources and their services.
- c) A workshop to train clients on how to do information interviews was designed and implemented on the afternoon of session 8. A survey of employers was organized to determine the three most important factors sought by employers during job interviews. Each woman was given the task of interviewing two employers and reporting her findings at the following session. The secondary goal of this specific task was to force the participants to go into the active labor market and to interact with an employer in a low threat situation. The steps involved in doing an information interview were discussed, demonstrated in role play and then practised in triads.

The women were encouraged to use the information interview to acquire data about possible career choices, to interview other women who had re-entered the paid work force and to obtain all the information necessary to apply for a job.

d) In the original program, one hour was devoted to the writing of a curriculum vitae and a presentation letter. In the revised program, a workshop of two hours was designed on the writing of a résumé with additional time set aside outside of class time for individual help. Eventually, an extra workshop was organized outside of course time for those who wanted feedback and needed help with the structure and wording. Arrangements were made with the St. Boniface Community College to have the completed résumés typed by the students taking the wordprocessing course.

The workshop (session 9) consisted of a presentation on résumés, (types, use, headings, organization of information, presentation, etc.) and the handout of samples written by other women with similar background experience. The samples were reviewed together with particular attention given to the expressions used to describe motherwork and home management experience.

e) Three employers (two female and one male) were invited to session 10 to discuss job interviews and to explain the employment procedures for their company. One employer was a hiring agent in a hospital with over a thousand employees; the second employer was director of a cultural centre and dealt with a staff of 30 employees, and the third was manager of a restaurant with a staff of 15 employees.

In preparation for the panel, the participants listed on a flipchart all of the questions they wished to ask. The questions were grouped and organized in a logical order and assigned to various participants. Ways of initiating the interviewing and of establishing a climate were discussed. The group controlled the informational content and the proceedings.

Following the panel presentation, three groups were formed and assigned to separate classrooms. Each employer conducted a job interview with a volunteer candidate. The interviews were evaluated and feedback was given to the interviewer and the interviewee.

f) In the original program, 45 minutes was allotted for the role play of job interviews. In the revised program, the time was increased to two and one half hours to give each woman an opportunity to play the role of the interviewee and the interviewer, and to receive adequate feedback on her verbal and non-verbal communications.

This role playing was a continuation of the assertiveness training workshop with emphasis on answering interview questions with an attitude of confidence and by supporting answers with examples from one's related work experience.

#### Revision 4

##### Holland's Self Directed Search.

To gain an understanding of the six personality types and the six related work environments, the participants completed Holland's self directed search. The results were verified against their list of preferred activities identified at the third session on personal evaluation. The possibility of finding work environments that were

compatible with a person's skills and abilities was discussed. The consequences of working in an inconsistent job environment were also discussed. As well, the many tasks that made up the role of the homemaker were coded by the class.

This revision was added to help the women in their decision-making process and to give them information on personality types.

#### Revision 5

##### To Organize a Session on How to Start a Small Business.

Three women entrepreneurs from the Francophone community were invited to class to share their experiences, motivations, successes and hardships and also to answer questions. A consultant from the Manitoba Business Development Centre also informed the group regarding available resources, licenses and permits, market surveys, and training programs.

#### Revision 6

##### To Develop a Workshop on the Problem Solving-Decision Making Process.

A three hour workshop on problem solving was designed and implemented at the fourteenth session. To teach the steps involved, a problem situation that had been raised in previous sessions was used. One of the group leaders played the role of the person who owned the problem and answered questions regarding facts, assumptions, values, etc. (see Appendix D for the content). Following the demonstration, the participants were given time to work through a personal problem using work sheets.



Janis and Mann (1977, cited in Perosa & Perosa 1983) suggest four questions in weighing the pros and cons of change in answer to the question: "What shall I do with the rest of my life?" The following questions were presented to the participants of Nouveau Départ to help them in their process of decision making:

- a) Are the risks serious if I don't change?
- b) Are the risks serious if I do change?
- c) Is it realistic to hope to find a better solution?
- d) Is there sufficient time to search and deliberate?

#### Revision 7

#### To Organize Role Play Situations That Focus on Family Involvement and the Resolution of Conflicts.

Re-entry women need to share their thoughts, motivations and new aspirations with family members to prevent later conflicts. They need to discuss what adjustments will have to be made as the new roles of student or wage earner are assumed. Also, they need to learn how to deal effectively with conflict when it does arise.

In the revised program, Thomas Gordon's (1970) no-lose method of resolving conflicts was taught as a follow-up to the problem solving workshop. The steps involved in his approach were described and demonstrated in a role play. Afterwards, in triads, the participants practised the following steps: (a) setting an appointment, (b) describing the problems and needs using "I" language, (c) checking back, and (d) negotiating a solution.

Negotiation skills were further practised in an exercise that was designed to plan for the last day luncheon: location, cost, menu.

The three groups of participants discussed their wants, needs and ideas and decided on a plan they wished to propose to the whole group. Each group then elected a negotiator. The negotiators met as a central committee to discuss the plans. The plans were brought back to the groups for discussion and reactions. The negotiators met a second time to bring their group's feedback as to what ideas had been accepted and which had been rejected. Information was gathered as part of the decision making process. The object was to arrive by consensus at a decision that would meet the needs of all participants. Once a decision was reached, tasks were delegated.

#### Revision 8

#### To Develop a Workshop on Effective Short-term and Long-term Planning with Opportunities for Individual Work, Sharing and Feedback.

Formulation of an action plan is essential in helping a woman achieve her goals. It means establishing short-term and long-term goals and objectives within a time frame. The woman needs to identify those responsibilities and activities found in her present role that will have to be modified, shared or completely given up in order to achieve her new goals.

In the original program, 20 minutes was scheduled at the last session for the discussion of how to develop an action plan. In the revised program three hours was set aside for this session. The worksheets developed by Matte (1977) were used by the participants to assess the required action steps in preparation of reaching their goals (refer to the course outline of session 15, Appendix D).

Time was allotted for individual work and for the giving and

receiving of feedback on individual plans in dyads and in the subgroups.

### Acceptance of the Project

The proposal to lengthen Nouveau Départ to an eighty hour program was presented to the co-sponsors - St. Boniface Community College and Canada Employment and Immigration - at a joint meeting in mid-August, 1985. The revisions were approved. Because of the time frame changes to two five-hour sessions per week, the participants became eligible for a training allowance. The maximum course capacity was set at 24 participants.

The Nouveau Départ Corporation of Montreal was also informed of the proposed revisions to their program. A motion accepting the project on a pilot basis was passed at a Board meeting on August 26, 1985.

In September, participants for the program were recruited through the normal publicity channels used for adult education programs at St. Boniface Community College: brochures, publicity in the local papers (La Liberté and the Red River Post), French radio and television stations, church and community organizations. Sixteen women attended an information meeting held on September 13, 1985.

The enrollment procedure involved registration with the St. Boniface Employment Centre and an interview with an employment counsellor to clarify the participants' objectives in taking Nouveau Départ and to determine eligibility for sponsorship. These interviews were held at St. Boniface College in the classroom scheduled for use

during the course. At the same time, the applicants were met by the course personnel and informed that the program was being revised and that this revision was the basis of a master's practicum project. Applicants were asked to sign a form of consent (see Appendix A) granting permission for the use of their evaluation comments in the project report. Confidentiality was guaranteed. The applicants completed a questionnaire soliciting demographic information and their objectives in wanting to be participants.

### **The Participants**

The following demographic characteristics were compiled from the questionnaire. The results are summarized in Table I. The 21 participants ranged in age from 24 years to 60 years of age with the majority (16) in the middle age range of 40 to 55. Seventeen were married and 4 were again singles as the result of a divorce or the death of their spouse. Family size varied from one child to 10 children; 14 of the participants were mothers of two children. Most of the women still had children living at home. In terms of their educational level, the participants had between 7 and 16 years of schooling. Four participants had a grade 12 level and 3 had post secondary training. Fourteen had not completed their high school. Five of the participants were from the rural area versus 16 who lived in the city.

### Paid and Volunteer Work Experiences

Before marriage, 19 candidates had been employed as either teachers, nurses or nurse's aides or office workers. After marriage, 8 had worked full time from one to 17 years and 7 had worked part-time from six months to 20 years. Eight women had also co-managed a family farm or other business. Their work in the family enterprise had involved driving farm machinery, milking cows, candling eggs, bookkeeping, typing, taking messages, running errands and sharing in decision-making.

At the time Nouveau Départ was offered, one woman worked full-time (evening shift) and 5 women worked part-time. They held positions as homecare worker, hairdresser, nurses' aide, secretary and teacher. None of the participants who had received post-secondary training was committed to her occupation. Most wished to discover a new and more satisfying field of work.

The same lack of commitment applied to those women who had devoted many years to homemaking. Many of the women in the 45 to 60 age group expressed a deep frustration and discontent with the many routine tasks of homemaking - particularly the meal preparation and the housecleaning chores. At the same time, they expressed guilt feelings and questioned their discontent. The following comment reflected the attitude of many of the participants:

"I don't understand what's wrong with me... after so many years of enjoying preparing meals and doing all those things for my family... now I wish I never had to prepare another meal again."

T A B L E 1

Demographic information on Nouveau Départ participants for the program offered from September 30 to November 21, 1985.

1. <u>Age</u>		2. <u>Marital Status</u>	
34 yrs. or less	2	married	17
35 to 39 yrs.	1	divorced	1
40 to 44 yrs.	3	separated	1
45 to 49 yrs.	4	widowed	2
50 to 55 yrs.	9	(N=21)	
56 yrs. or more	2		
(N=21)			
3. <u>Number of children per family</u>		4. <u>Age of children</u>	
2 children or less	14	less than 5 yrs.	2
three children	2	between 5 and 12 yrs.	6
four children or more	5	between 13 and 19 yrs.	15
(N=21)		between 20 and 29 yrs.	29
		between 30 and 39 yrs.	16
		(N=68)	
5. <u>Participant's level of education</u>		6. <u>Volunteer experience</u>	
grade 7 to 9	7	yes	17
grade 10 or 11	7	no	3
grade 12	4	no response	1
post secondary	3	(N=21)	
(N=21)			
7. <u>Previous work experience in the wage sector</u>			
<u>Before marriage</u> (N=21)			
a) full time employment			18
b) part time employment			1
c) no paid employment			2
<u>After marriage</u> (N=21)			
a) full time employment outside the home			8
b) part time employment outside the home *			7
c) work in a family enterprise			8
d) no paid work experience outside the home			8

\* 2 participants had worked full time and also part time in the wage sector.

In volunteer activities, 17 women had run the full gamut from being a leader in the 4-H Club or Guides to presiding over committees in the Catholic Women's League or other community groups.

Of the 15 full time homemakers, 7 had paid work experience outside the home and 8 had not worked for wages since their marriage. Because of this lack of work experience in the wage sector, the facilitators and the coordinator expected that these women would be out of touch with the demands and requirements of the wage sector. Indeed, they expressed concerns such as wanting new ideas on work opportunities, wanting to know where they could use their skills and how they could prepare themselves for a job interview. They also expressed their fears and lack of confidence:

"What can I possibly contribute? I've never done anything worthwhile in my life."

"I have no experience."

### Objectives in Taking Nouveau Départ

As Table 2, below, points out, most participants hoped to gain confidence, self-awareness and self-esteem by taking Nouveau Départ. Two thirds were struggling with the issue of autonomy. Many participants expressed, at the first session of the course, their need for emotional support from peers who were dealing with similar issues. Most wanted information on possible options and 17 anticipated re-entry in the wage sector.

Five women were interested in full-time paid work and of these, 4 had checked both full-time and part-time employment. This may

reflect their uncertainty regarding how to attempt re-entry.

Nine women thought they might want to finish their education and/or work part-time. Half of the women who had reported being actively involved in the community (N=17) wished to continue doing volunteer work. Seven anticipated bringing about some changes in the home life, either in the parent-child or spousal relationship and/or in the sharing of housework.

### Motivation for Role Change

Total dissatisfaction with their present state of life was reported by 4 participants and 14 reported being partly dissatisfied. A change was estimated as necessary by 17 participants. Their reasons for wanting a change are aforementioned in Table 2. Five women reported needing to find a job to help bring in money. Achieving financial independence was a motivating factor for 13 women. The possibility that they would eventually be alone was reported as the reason for seeking a role change by 14 of the 17 married participants.

At the introductory session, many participants whose children were of school age or beyond, spoke about their feelings of loneliness and their sense of isolation. Three quarters of the group expressed a need for activities outside the home.

Fifteen participants stated a need to change the image that they project on others.



T A B L E 2

**Participants' enrollment objectives and motivation factors.**

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* <u>Participants' enrollment objectives</u> (N=21)			
to gain self understanding			18
to gain or regain self confidence			17
to gain a sense of self worth			16
to take charge of my life ie. gain independence			14
to establish contacts outside the home			17
to complete my education			9
to get information on possible options			17
to prepare myself for a paying job			17
* <u>Type of changes anticipated at time of enrollment</u> (N=21)			
full time paid employment			5
part time paid employment			16
education			9
volunteer work			9
changes in the home life			7
* <u>Level of life satisfaction</u>			
	<u>yes</u>	<u>partially</u>	<u>no</u>
are you satisfied with your life at present?	3	14	4
do you think it necessary to bring about a change?	17	4	-
* <u>Motivation factors</u>			
to gain financial independence			13
a need for activities outside the home			16
to complete my husband's income			5
for security should I find myself alone			14
to change my husband's image of me			6
to change other people's image of me			9

\* participants checked more than one answer.

### **The Group Facilitators**

The three group facilitators were selected on the basis of their experience, training and/or potential as facilitators and on the basis of their involvement in the first program of Nouveau Départ, either as participants or as a group leader. They were in the 35 to 55 age bracket and could relate to the different participants' experiences.

Six days of preparation time were set aside prior to the course during which we trial tested the revised content and exercises, learned to work as a team, clarified role expectations and refined the course structure. Once the program got underway, a half day staff meeting was scheduled every two weeks to evaluate the course content, give each other feedback and to review and prepare for the upcoming sessions.

### **Method of Evaluating the Program**

The program was evaluated by the observation of the participants' reactions to the revised course.

As well, the participants completed a written formative evaluation (see Appendix D) at the seventh session which marked the end of the introspection phase and the beginning of the reorganization phase of the program. The purposes of the formative evaluation were to assess whether the objectives were being met, whether they were changing and whether any adjustments had to be made in the second half of the program.

At the final session of the program a summative evaluation (see Appendix E) was administered to assess whether the participants' personal objectives were met and to evaluate the results of the new content in four areas:

- 1) the self-confidence and self-awareness gained
- 2) the skills acquired
- 3) the information received
- 4) the decisions reached and the plans of action developed.

Four months later, at a follow-up session, the same summative evaluation was completed by the 20 participants. The three group facilitators and the coordinator also assessed to what extent their objectives, as reported in Appendix F, had been met.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the results of the previously stated methods will be reported and discussed. First, the mid-point formative evaluation will be introduced followed by observed reactions to the revised course content. These reactions will deal specifically with the transition process, assertiveness training, information interviews, the résumé, problem solving, family involvement, and developing a plan of action. Also included in the observations will be a discussion of the coping styles. Lastly, the results of the two summative evaluations completed at the end of the program (November 21, 1985) and at the follow-up session (March 21, 1986) will be reported simultaneously.

### **The Mid-Point Evaluation: October 21, 1985**

In the participants' mid-point evaluation of their objectives in Table 3, the majority indicated that the personal growth objectives related to the content of the first seven sessions of the program (self-understanding, confidence building, support, etc.) were being met.

Surprisingly, 11 of the 18 participants who were seeking information on different options indicated that this objective was being met. This seemed high since very little time had been devoted to the exploration of options up to this point in the program.

T A B L E 3

Participants' evaluation of their objectives: October 21, 1985.

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<u>Objectives</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Met</u>	<u>Partially</u>	<u>Not Met</u>
to gain self-understanding	21	19	2	
to gain or regain self-confidence	19	15	4	
to gain a sense of self-worth	20	16	4	
to take charge of my life	18	15	3	
to establish contact outside the home	18	13	5	
to complete my studies	12	5	3	4
to get information on all options	18	11	4	3
to get support from others	19	17	1	1
undergoing the same experience				
to prepare myself to find a job	15	*		

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\* This item was omitted by mistake on page 2 of the questionnaire.

Six participants indicated that their objectives had changed.

Their new objectives were:

1. the need to reach a decision (regarding spousal relationship, vocational training, changing jobs) (3)
2. the need to complete high school education (1)
3. the need to find a part-time paid job (1)
4. the need for "my own money" (1)
5. the need to gain the family's cooperation in sharing the housework (1)

These new objectives were related to the content of the second half of the program which dealt with family involvement, problem solving, decision making and the exploration of options.

Informal discussion in subgroups revealed that some participants were very anxious about completing evaluations. The evaluation was viewed as a "test" that was an assessment of their participation rather than an assessment of the program. Also, comments were made about the terminology used in some sessions and the participants' reluctance to ask for clarification for fear of being labelled stupid.

Of the seven sessions, the topics that were assessed as most valuable were the emotional implications of change, autonomy and assertiveness. One-third of the group had experienced difficulty with the task of identifying skills, abilities and interests in session 3. The task required the re-examination of a large volume of experience of past years and would have required more time. Some of the vocational skills had lost their relevance with today's technology. Recall was distorted for some by a sense of having done nothing of value.

The group leaders had observed some difficulties with writing which meant that a few participants required extra help and more time to complete written tasks.

The group leaders and the coordinator also felt that session 2 on changes and session 7 on the process of transitions had been overloaded with input. Not enough time had been allotted for debriefing.

For the second half of the program, it was proposed to allow more debriefing time at the end of each session, to simplify the language used in the handouts and the paper and pencil exercises, and to encourage the participants to ask questions for clarification. The task of identifying abilities and interests would be reworked in

completing résumés. The purpose of the course evaluations would be clarified.

The personnel's objectives of working as a team, of gaining self-confidence as facilitators and of improving their listening skills were also being met.

At this point, one participant quit the program to start a part-time job. Twenty participants completed the program.

### **Observations**

#### **Reactions to the Revised Course Content**

##### Transition Process

The workshops on change and transitions were assessed by the participants as being valuable in bringing to consciousness the fact that transitions are a part of living, that change in self and in the environment occur all the time and that each person has some inner strength that has allowed her to survive and grow through the difficult times. Many participants expressed relief at realizing that stress in their family life came not only from themselves but also from the social context or as a result of multi-changes occurring in the family structure, as well as normal life transitions being experienced by other family members.

##### Assertiveness Training

The session on assertiveness was emotionally draining for many. Most found it very hard to receive a compliment and commented on

it. Some had difficulty believing in the positive feedback since the information did not fit with their low self concept and/or they had not received a compliment in a long time. Another exercise of giving and receiving positive feedback was presented at the last session to reinforce this skill.

Assertiveness training should receive more emphasis since it affects how women make decisions, take risks and act upon their decisions. Dependency, as reflected in non-assertive behavior, is the biggest block to changing life styles (Manis & Mochizuki, 1972). Many women in Nouveau Départ had gone directly from dependency type relationships in their parental families to the same dependency type patterns with their husbands; they had not developed a sense of personal identity. Many expressed resentment at this dependency and at the same time were afraid of taking personal risks and making decisions. Assertiveness training could be introduced sooner in the program; this way assertive behavior would be reinforced throughout the course. Many participants expressed a desire to enroll in an adult education course on assertiveness training at a later date.

#### Information Interviews

For most women, the task of interviewing two employers to identify the factors considered during job interviews appeared to be a formidable hurdle requiring a great deal of courage. However, when they arrived in class three days later, they all seemed quite excited and pleased with what they had accomplished. In subgroups, each woman shared her experience, reported her findings and the results were then compiled. The three major factors sought in job interviews were a neat



appearance, work experience and reliability. These results coincided with a similar survey conducted in the United States and reported in the JIST workbook (Farr, Gaither & Pickrell, 1983).

The information interview task gave the women an opportunity to experience the role of interviewer (control position) before becoming the interviewee.

### The Résumé

At session 9, when it was suggested to the participants that they start working on their own résumés, many became distressed. Some of the common remarks heard were: "I won't have anything to write down", "I have not done anything that's worth writing about" and "A resume of what? I've never worked". They were downgrading their many accomplishments in family enterprises and community organizations and had difficulty acknowledging their contribution as mothers and homemakers. To help them get started, the women were regrouped in terms of major experience: the women with farm work experience worked together; those with fulltime homemaking and volunteer experience formed a second group and a third group consisted of women who had homemaking plus secretarial, nursing, teaching or other work experience. The three facilitators were assigned to whatever group that was most relevant to their own work background. Working in subgroups eased the tension and provided the support and encouragement needed. For 80% of the women, writing a résumé was a struggle. Many found it hard to value their mother work and to include it on their résumés. This task ended up being a values clarification exercise and a confidence builder. Eighteen participants completed their résumés

and 12 had them typed by college students.

### Problem Solving

At the 14th session on the problem solving process, because many participants still required help in working through the steps of clarifying the problem and defining goals, they worked in dyads or in groups of four.

It would have been beneficial for each of the subgroups to work through a real problem situation in order to apply the problem solving process that had been introduced in the plenary session.

### Family Involvement

Many women were reluctant to discuss their feelings and plans with their families. They feared criticism - not only from their spouses and children but from their own aging parents and in-laws. Some who had attempted discussions had received encouragement and support. Others who had shared their plans of returning to school or finding a job had been greeted with ridicule, anger and comments such as: "You have this house and every new gadget in it ... aren't you happy?"

Before raising the issue of conflict resolution, the participants would have needed practice in approaching the initial task of sharing their plans with the family in a positive and assertive way to gain support.

Some spouses felt threatened by the proposed role changes as their wives considered re-entry. In some instances, the wife's plan to leave the home for school or paid work was interpreted by the husband

as a personal affront or failure to provide adequately for the family.

In future programs, it might be helpful to organize a mini session with the husbands and/or significant others to discuss changes in their lives, in the lives of midlife women, and to clarify the purpose of Nouveau Départ. Such a session would increase their knowledge and understanding of changes in the middle years and hopefully would lessen their fears.

#### Developing a Plan of Action

Some women had difficulty in elaborating a plan of action. They needed help in identifying the steps involved in reaching a specific goal. It would have been helpful to work through one or two plans in a plenary session before asking the participants to work on their individual plans.

Most women needed to sound out their ideas with others. Thus, much of the work was done in pairs and in subgroups. The feedback from peers was very important. Group members asked for clarification, gave new ideas, presented a different outlook, and provided names of contacts for information and resources.

#### Observed Coping Styles

There was evidence of differences in styles of decision-making and coping with change among the participants.

Using Ackerman's (1984) and Brebner and Sundre's (1982) descriptors, the following coping styles were observed: (a) the deciders who were ready for change and excited about their future

plans, (b) the conventionalists who had strong family priorities, (c) the evaders who felt stuck in a chaotic family life or paid work situation, and (d) the dabblers who were frightened of change to the point of inaction.

For the deciders, Nouveau Départ was a final boost towards their goals. The program helped them clarify their career goals and provided peer support. These women appeared less concerned about having the family's support. On the other hand, for the participants who feared change, family psychological support was extremely important. Nouveau Départ was a starting point in their process of change. These women would need to grow in self-esteem through personal development programs and successful experiences in volunteer or paid activities to increase their readiness for risk taking.

**The Summative Evaluations: November 21, 1985 and March 21, 1986**

**Evaluation of the Objectives**

Table 4 compares the participants' assessments in November and in March, to find if their objectives were met in the revised program. About two-thirds of the participants who hoped to gain self understanding, self confidence and self worth claimed to have met their objectives. Of those who wished to achieve greater autonomy, 12 felt that this objective had been met in March versus five in November. It appears that something positive occurred during the four month interval for some of the participants.

The objectives of establishing contacts and obtaining information on options was only partially met for the rural participants as reported on the November and March evaluations. Rural versus urban living has been identified in the literature review as one of the obstacles to achieving re-entry. This factor was not given enough consideration in planning the course content. The information presented on the options of paid and volunteer work and education pertained to resources available mainly in the urban centre. Three participants were quite frustrated to discover in their own information search that the adult upgrading courses and training programs needed to complete their studies and improve their chances for promotion, were not available in their area.

On the March evaluation, all 12 participants who aimed for re-entry claimed to have met their objective of preparation for this move. The change in level of satisfaction between the two evaluations may be attributed to the experience obtained by some in applying for work during the four month interval. Also, the difference in the number of participants who had preparation for wage sector re-entry as an objective - from 16 in November to 12 in March may result from a clarification of needs or from the identification of obstacles.

The needs for peer support were met for most of the participants by the end of the program. During the four months following Nouveau Départ, many participants maintained contacts by phone and by group meetings. However, some participants had difficulty in establishing and especially in maintaining relationships with their peers. Informal discussion revealed that certain family sayings and beliefs created barriers: "you don't wash your dirty linen in public."

TABLE 4

The Evaluation of course objectives at the end of the program (November) and at the four month follow-up (March).

<u>November Evaluation</u>					
<u>Objectives</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Met</u>	<u>Partially Met</u>	<u>Not Met</u>	<u>* NA</u>
1. self understanding	19	13	6		
2. self confidence	17	11	6		
3. self worth	18	12	6		
4. achieve autonomy	16	5	11		
5. establish contacts	18	12	6		
6. complete my studies	11	7	4		
7. information on options	18	14	4		
8. preparation for wage sector re-entry	16	6	9		1
9. peer support	17	12	5		
10. to reach a decision re job change	2	2			
<u>March Evaluation</u>					
<u>Objectives</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Met</u>	<u>Partially Met</u>	<u>Not Met</u>	<u>* NA</u>
1. self understanding	17	12	5		
2. self confidence	17	10	6		1
3. self worth	17	12	3		2
4. achieve autonomy	16	12	4		
5. establish contacts	15	9	6		
6. complete my studies	11	7	1	2	1
7. information on options	15	10	3		2
8. prep. for wage sector re-entry	12	12			
9. peer support	16	13	2	1	
10. to improve my chances for advancement	1			1	
11. to recuperate from a crisis	1	1			

\* No answer

"Your husband should fill all your emotional and social needs."

Some of the participants had not had, since their marriage, a female friend outside of the family and the husband's circle of friends and felt guilty and insecure about pursuing their own personal friendships.

### Changes in Attitude and Behavior

Question three on the evaluation measured change in self confidence, assertiveness, self awareness, autonomy and self worth by asking the participants to respond to statements and to indicate where they situated themselves on a scale of one to six at two different time intervals. On the November evaluation, they indicated the attitude or behavioral change that had occurred during the eight weeks of the course. In March, they indicated what change had occurred during the four month interval following Nouveau Départ.

Everyone was in high spirits by the end of the program as was demonstrated by the increased level of verbal participation, the laughter, the singing, and the demonstrations of affection. This high was reflected in the responses to the statements on the November evaluation. In Table 5, the average scores in columns 'a' and 'b' revealed that the participants had experienced positive changes in their levels of self confidence, autonomy, self awareness, decision making and assertiveness. The greatest gain (+ 2.24) was related to their ability to say positive things about themselves (statement 6). During the first part of the program it was observed that most

TABLE 5

The group average for each statement in question IIIA of the evaluation completed in November, 1985 and in March, 1986.

SCALE USED: 1 - not at all      3 - more or less      5 - sufficiently  
2 - some                      4 - a fair amount      6 - very much

<u>STATEMENT</u>	<u>a</u>	<u>b</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>c</u>	<u>d</u>	<u>Difference</u>
	Before N.D.	End of N.D.		End of N.D.	4 mo. Later	
1. I have self confidence	2.84	5.0	+ 2.16	4.53	4.21	- 0.32
2. I can conquer my shyness	2.95	5.0	+ 2.05	4.32	4.26	- 0.06
3. I feel more autonomous	3.11	4.82	+ 1.71	4.37	4.90	+ 0.53
4. I know my strengths & aptitudes	3.16	5.18	+ 2.02	4.28	4.79	+ 0.51
5. I can make a decision	2.74	4.82	+ 2.08	4.00	4.42	+ 0.42
6. I can talk about me in a positive way	2.58	4.82	+ 2.24	4.15	4.53	+ 0.38
7. I can ask directly for help or information	2.85	4.94	+ 2.1	4.42	4.95	+ 0.53
8. I have a greater sense of worth in my role as a homemaker	3.84	4.47	+ 0.63	3.84	4.2	+ 0.38

**a, b = responses in column a and b were obtained on the last day of the course (November, 1985).**

**c, d = responses in column c and d were obtained four months later (March, 1986).**



participants had difficulty in talking about themselves, their skills and strengths and had difficulty accepting positive feedback. The change in attitude was observed as they worked with greater ease on their résumés and as they practised answering interview questions.

Differences can be noted between the average scores for "end of Nouveau Départ" obtained in November (see column b) and obtained four months later (see column c). Only 31% of the responses were accurate recalls. The higher scores in November may be a reflection of the positive group feelings that existed at that time.

Four months after the course ended, a drop in group average was noticeable for the first statement on self confidence (- 0.32) and for the second statement on conquering shyness (- 0.06). The average scores for the other statements showed a small gain.

Comparison of the individual responses in columns 'c' and 'd' (see Appendix G) for the first statement: "I have confidence in myself" revealed that eight participants perceived a similar score, five perceived a slight increase, and six had experienced a drop in their level of confidence. For the second statement: "I can conquer my shyness", nine participants reported a similar score, six reported an increase and four reported a drop. For the other statements 3 to 8, over three quarters of the participants reported a similar score or a slight increase. Therefore, 4 months after the end of the revised program, most of the participants had maintained the positive changes in attitude and behavior.

If this questionnaire were to be reused, statement eight would have to be changed. "I have a greater sense of worth in my role as a homemaker" already contains a measure of change with the word

"greater". It assumes that there has been a change and makes it confusing to assess. To measure the change in the participant's attitude towards her role as mother and homemaker would require two statements: "I value my work as a mother" and "I value my work as a home manager".

### Changes In the Family

At the end of the program Nouveau Départ, as summarized in Table 6, 14 participants claimed that their relationship with their husbands had improved. Four months later, three participants felt that no change had occurred while 13 felt there had been a fair amount of change. Of the 19 participants who responded, 17 reported a 'fair amount' to 'very much' improvement in their relationships with their children during the post course interval. It is not clear what produced the change. It may be the participants' greater sense of confidence, their increased ability to assert themselves, and their ability to ask directly for help.

The statements used to obtain this information: "My relationship with my husband has improved" and "my relationship with my children has improved" implied that only positive change occurred. It is possible that some relationships would have experienced greater difficulties with the change in autonomy and assertiveness demonstrated by the participant. It would have been simpler to ask if any change had been observed in the relationship and if so -- whether it was a positive or negative change.

TABLE 6

Improvement in the relationships with the spouse and with the children reported at the end of the program and four months later. (frequency)

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IMPROVEMENT	<u>Relationship with spouse</u>		<u>Relationship with children</u>	
	<u>End of N.D.</u>	<u>4 Mo. Later</u>	<u>End of N.D.</u>	<u>4 Mo. Later</u>
not at all	1	3	2	0
some	1	0	1	1
more or less	0	0	0	1
a fair amount	1	5	3	8
much	6	7	7	5
very much	6	1	4	4
Total responses *	15	16	17	19

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\* The totals vary since the participants did not respond to all of the statements.

### Skills Acquired

As indicated in Table 7, some of the skills taught in the revised program had already been acquired by some participants before Nouveau Départ. All other participants indicated that they had acquired a fair amount or very much skill in the areas presented.

The follow-up evaluation summary indicated an increase in the number of participants who felt that they had gained very much skill in the preparation of a curriculum vitae and in the answering of job interview questions. This change may have resulted from the experience obtained by some in applying for paid work during the 4 month interval. The follow-up evaluation also indicated that a few participants felt that they had not acquired some of the skills-particularly in developing an action plan and in self assertiveness. This may have indicated a need for individual consultation when it came to developing a plan of action as recommended by Manis and Mochizuki (1972). It also indicated the need for follow-up work in the area of assertiveness training to facilitate the process of dealing with job and information interviews.

A few participants checked the space between "not at all" and "a fair amount" indicating a need for a fourth column in the ranking of skill acquisition.

### Information Obtained

In Table 8, the average scores obtained in response to the question: "Have you received sufficient information on the following

TABLE 7

Answers obtained at the end of the program<sup>A</sup> and four months later<sup>B</sup> to the question: "What skills have you acquired during the program?"

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**A. End of Program Evaluation**

<u>Skill</u>	N	<u>not at all</u>	<u>a fair amount</u>	<u>very much</u>	<u>acquired before N.D.</u>
give and receive a compliment	20	0	5	9	6
prepare a résumé	20	0	8	11	1
answer job interview questions	20	0	8	11	1
initiate an information interview	19	0	10	8	1
solve a problem	20	0	10	9	1
negotiate	20	0	11	7	2
develop an action plan	20	0	9	9	2
assert myself	20	0	9	10	1

**B. Follow-Up Evaluation**

<u>Skill</u>	N	<u>not at all</u>	<u>a fair amount</u>	<u>very much</u>	<u>acquired before N.D.</u>
give and receive a compliment	20	0	6	8	6
prepare a résumé	20	0	5	14	1
answer job interview questions	20	0	* 6	13	0
initiate an information interview	20	1	** 10	7	0
solve a problem	20	1	11	6	2
negotiate	18	1	7	9	1
develop an action plan	20	3	* 8	8	0
assert myself	19	2	8	8	1

\* Four persons checked the space between "not at all" and "a fair amount" for these skills.

TABLE 8

Average scores obtained to the question: "Have you received sufficient information on the following topics?"

Scale Used = 1 - insufficient  
 2 - a little  
 3 - good quantity  
 4 - all the necessary information

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<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>End of Program</u>	<u>4 Months Later</u>	<u>Difference</u>
1. resources available at an employment centre	3.40	3.05	- 0.35
2. employer's expectations	3.45	3.20	- 0.25
3. job search methods	3.65	3.32	- 0.33
4. the job interview	3.45	3.21	- 0.24
5. completing your studies	3.53	3.42	- 0.11
6. starting a small business	3.26	3.11	- 0.15
7. the transition process	3.42	3.25	- 0.17

Note: Frequency varies since participants did not respond to all items.

topics?" indicated that the participants felt that they had obtained a good quantity of information.

The follow-up averages in the second column showed a decrease in the amount of information that the participants felt they had received. A drop was noticeable particularly for "information on resources available at an employment centre" (- 0.35) and "job search methods" (- 0.33). This may be explained by the difficulties experienced by some of the participants in their dealings with their local employment centres. At the follow-up session, five participants reported having had problems getting past the receptionist and obtaining interviews with counsellors of their choice. Coping with situations of poor service and bureaucracy would have to be discussed in future programs.

### Options

Five options were explored during Nouveau Départ: paid employment, education, volunteer work, starting a small business, and homemaking with changes incorporated in the home. The options selected by the participants working in the home and those employed in the wage sector are reported in Table 9.

### Participants in the Wage Sector

For the women who had already re-entered the wage sector (N=5) the changes considered at the end of the program were full-time professional training, starting a small business and combining part-time education with a part-time job. Four months later, only one

TABLE 9

Main options chosen in November, 1985 and in March, 1986 based on the participant's work status at the time of the program.

<u>Main OPTIONS</u>	<u>Working in the home</u> (N=15)		<u>Working in the</u> <u>Wage Sector *</u> (N=5)	
	<u>Nov '85</u>	<u>March '86</u>	<u>Nov '85</u>	<u>March '86</u>
full-time employment	-	-	-	1
part-time employment	9 a	4 b	-	2
start a business	1	2	2	-
full-time education	2	2	1	-
part-time education	6	1	2	2
homemaking with changes	-	3	-	-
volunteer work	2	1	-	-
undecided	-	4	-	-
<u>Additional OPTIONS</u>				
volunteer work	4	1	2	3
changes in the home	8	2	2	1
personal development courses	13	4	1	2

a: five participants combined part-time work and education.

b: two women combined part-time employment with part-time education or starting a business.

\* four worked part-time and one worked full-time evenings during Nouveau Départ.



person had maintained the same goal of combining part-time training with her part-time job. One woman had reclarified her short-term goals and put off starting a business until the children were older. The obstacles that prevented the 4 participants from reaching their original goals were: (a) the lack of money and spousal support, (b) the stress of caring for an aging parent, (c) the lack of educational resources in the rural area, and (d) the fear of changing to full-time employment.

During the 4 month interval, two women had enrolled in a course at the St. Boniface College for the fall, one person had applied for and obtained a new part-time job, one had increased her part-time work hours and one was attempting to bring about changes in the working conditions at her job. Setbacks and obstacles did not discourage them. They were able to reassess the situation, set new goals and act upon these goals. Their need for financial autonomy was strong.

#### Homeworkers

Of the 15 women who worked in the home at the time Nouveau Départ was given, most chose employment and education on a part-time basis. Part-time status was preferred as a method of re-entry since it allowed gradual adaptation to change for themselves and their families. Two participants selected volunteer work as their path to re-entry. In addition to their main option, many wished to bring about changes in the home - in achieving greater autonomy and/or in the sharing of household tasks. Most participants wished to continue their personal growth by taking self-awareness courses and assertiveness training.

Four months later, 6 women maintained the same goals, 5 had changed their plans and 4 had dropped all plans for change and remained undecided. Of those who had changed their plans, three chose to focus on bringing about changes in the home, one decided to start a small business and one person decided to attempt re-entry via volunteer work experience rather than the wage sector.

During the 4 month interval some action had been taken by 12 women. Five women had participated in a self-awareness course, one was learning how to teach French as a second language and one had participated in a peer counselor training program. Two women had applied for work and obtained job interviews. One woman had been accepted for an eight-week Clinical Pastoral Education training program and one woman was settling her family in a new home after obtaining a divorce. One person had increased her sales in a small enterprise and one was experimenting with ideas for a business of her own. A few were also seeing a counsellor for help in dealing with personal issues.

The four women who had cancelled all plans felt that they could not reach a decision as stated in the following reasons:

I am not ready to undertake a change at this time	<u>2</u>
I have personal problems to cope with	<u>2</u>
The obstacles are too great to overcome	<u>2</u>
I feel defeated	<u>1</u>
I lack self confidence	<u>1</u>

(some checked more than one)

At the follow-up session, these participants expressed feelings of depression and fear of taking risks. Their greatest fear was of upsetting a lifetime of being dependent and of doing for others.

Their undecisiveness also coincided with low scores in self confidence, autonomy, decision-making, etc... reported in question three of the evaluation.

### Obstacles

Many obstacles to change were identified in question V of the evaluation. Participants checked from one to six obstacles.

Lack of self confidence and the inability to drive a car were added to the list (refer to Appendix I) in March. The participants' ranking of the obstacles in order of difficulty is reported in Table 10.

At the end of the program, the participants rated the lack of support from their spouses as the greatest obstacle. Other major difficulties were lack of determination, lack of support from the children and geographical distance from the resource centers. In March, lack of determination in reaching their goals was rated the greatest obstacle with lack of educational training in second place. One explanation for this change may be the realization that a major source of resistance to change is internal as pointed out by Bardwick (1979), Mogul (1979) and Sullivan (1983). Also, attempts to find paid work or to enrol for courses during the 4 month interval may have been thwarted by a lack of job entry skills. Other major obstacles reported in March, were the lack of support from husband and children, health problems and the fear of changing. The fears identified were fear of the unknown, fear of disrupting their marriage and fear of failure. Goodman (1979) clarifies that these fears are increased by a

TABLE 10

The participants' rank ordering of the obstacles in November, 1985 and in March, 1986 using a scale of 1-5 with 1 being their greatest obstacle.

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A. November, 1985 N=17

<u>Average</u>	<u>Obstacle</u>
1.71	lack of support from my husband
2.25	lack of determination
2.25	lack of support from my children
2.60	geographical distance
2.67	lack of financial resources
2.71	health problems
2.82	fear of changing
3.57	lack of educational training
3.6	isolation
4.0	lack of resources in my area

B. March, 1986 N=18

<u>Average</u>	<u>Obstacle</u>
1.71	lack of determination
2.29	lack of educational training
2.33	lack of support from husband
2.33	lack of support from children
2.50	health problems
2.57	fear of changing
2.60	geographical distance
2.75	lack of resources in my area
3.33	lack of financial resources

pattern of dependency and reflect an ambivalence towards change. Some of the participants lacked the commitment and determination required to cope with difficulties and changed or cancelled their plans at the slightest resistance demonstrated by family members. As Brooks (1978), Lutter (1982), Pearson (1979), Rice (1982) and Rubin (1979) pointed out, the psychological support from family members is crucial to midlife homemakers in making a serious commitment to a life outside the home.

One participant added that a major obstacle in her attempt to achieve autonomy was her inability to drive a car. For the rural woman, having to drive to the city to find work or to take training was a drawback. Also for those who wished to upgrade their educational level, there were no adult upgrading courses taught in French and no classes offered in preparation for the High School Equivalency (GED) exams.

The list of obstacles on the evaluation form would have been more complete had the item "my guilt feelings" been added. Guilt was attached to the struggle confronting many of these women in finding something meaningful to do that met their needs without necessarily meeting other people's expectations of them. As stated in the literature review, it was no easy task for most of the participants to start caring for themselves and to strive for growth and autonomy.

Other issues that affected the participants' abilities to commit themselves to a goal, to reach a decision and to plan were:

- 1) the adaptation to other transitions in their lives - such as divorce and widowhood;
- 2) depression;
- 3) the care of an aging parent; and
- 4) adaptation to aging. Much as divorce and widowhood were the events

that had triggered a need for re-entry for some women, these transitions had not been completely processed and internalized and thus were affecting their level of psychological resources. Golan (1978) identifies disturbances in five significant role networks in widowhood: marital, familial, occupational, leisure time and institutional in addition to the losses and threats to self. The same disturbances occur in separation and divorce. Thus, the impact of these events on a woman's daily life would greatly hinder the process of effective re-entry.

#### Assets to Reaching Goals

In the Rice (1979) study of re-entry women, three quarters of the women rated themselves as their most important support with second place given to husbands and third place given either to husband, children or friends. Similarly, in Nouveau Départ, over half of the group rated their own determination as being their greatest asset (see Table 11). At the follow-up evaluation, second place was given to husband's support and third place was given to friends' support. As Schlossberg (1981, 1984) and Lowenthal et al. (1975) state, ease of adaptation to a transition depends on one's perceived or actual ratio of resources to deficits. An analysis of the participants' ratio between their list of obstacles and their list of assets confirms this. The participants who reported more assets than obstacles were more definite in their plans and were action-oriented. Those who reported more obstacles than assets tended to be ambivalent about their plans, afraid of change or undecided.

TABLE 11

Factors identified by Nouveau Départ participants that were an asset to reaching their goals.

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<u>Factors</u>	<u>End of program</u>	<u>4 months later</u>
	N=16	N=17
my determination	13	11
husband's support	5	8
children's support	5	6
support of my friends	*	7
opportunities available in my area	5	4
my financial independence	5	3
my educational training	2	1
my work experience	9	6

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\* this item was omitted by error on the November evaluation.

#### Reactions to the Course

All 20 participants stated that they would recommend Nouveau Départ to others. On both the November and the March evaluation, the personal development segment of the program was rated the most worthwhile with second place given to group support, third place given to the information on options. The job search techniques were rated as the least worthwhile segment. The importance of the personal development segment is reflected in the following comments:

"I came to Nouveau Départ because I had a great need to know myself better, to gain confidence and to become more independent."

"When I first came to the course, I had a knot in my stomach and I felt physically ill. Now I feel ready to take a first step forward. I've received comprehension, friendship and a whole lot of information."

"A few months ago I was completely 'burned out' physically, morally and emotionally. I needed support from outside the family group. In Nouveau Départ I found a new perspective essential to my healing. New contacts revealed that I could still be useful outside the home and family."

"It was a 'nouveau départ' for me to step out of my shell and attend this course. I felt that the program could help me overcome my feelings of confusion, uselessness, loneliness, inferiority and give me more confidence in myself. I discovered that I wasn't the only one who felt lonely. I've learned to understand myself and clarify my needs. I am not as shy and I've started singing again -- something I had stopped doing. However, I still have a long way to go."

### Follow-up Needs

Many participants expressed a need for ongoing support. The desire to maintain contact was higher at the end of the program (see Table 12) than 4 months later. However, in March, three-quarters of the participants still wished to meet on a regular basis as a support group. During the 4 month interval, some participants met socially and one group continued meeting with their facilitator and a therapist to



work on personal issues. A one day personal growth session was organized in June and attended by eight women. Participants were also invited by a local women's group to attend monthly activities as a way of maintaining contact with each other. It would have been wise to establish a committee to ensure the organization of follow-up activities.

**TABLE 12**

Responses to the question: "What kind of follow-up activity would be useful to you?"

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	<u>November '85</u>	<u>March '86</u>
a support group	17	14
a monthly meeting	12	10
a newsletter	12	7

## THE FACILITATORS' AND COORDINATOR'S EVALUATION

### Facilitators' Evaluation

Three persons had been involved with the original program - one as a group facilitator and two as participants. Their feedback on the original program and their reactions to the new input tested during the pre-course preparation stage was invaluable. They shared in the planning of session format, skill demonstrations, role plays and plenary sessions. Their impressions of the revised program were very positive. They felt that they also had received new information about the world of paid work and had acquired self understanding from the new content on transitions, the family life cycle, intrapersonal changes and problem solving.

The facilitators' objectives were quite varied. As reported in Table 13, some of their objectives focused on personal growth and others focused on their role as group facilitator.

By the end of the program, the two persons with little experience in leading groups felt that most of their objectives had been partially met. In March, the three facilitators revealed a high satisfaction of their objectives. They had grown in self confidence. In peer counselling and facilitating group process, they had acquired a sense of competence. Their involvement had given them a sense of achievement, had opened up new options and had helped them realize their potential. One facilitator identified a need for specific training on how to control the participation of members who constantly interrupt. This need could be better met during the pre-course

TABLE 13

Evaluation of the Facilitators' Objectives in November 1985 and in March 1986.  
(N=3)

	N	November 1985			March 1986		
		Met	Partially Met	Not Met	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
1. to contribute to the revision of the program	1	1			1		
2. to work as a team with the other facilitators and coordinator	1	1			1		
3. to gain an understanding of the Francophone milieu	1	1			1		
4. to develop my skills as peer counsellor and facilitator	3	1	2		3		
5. to learn and develop organizational skills	1	1			1		
6. to continue to grow in self understanding and self confidence	3	2	1		3		
7. to continue to grow towards autonomy	1		1		1		
8. to provide active listening and support to the participants	2	1	1		2		
9. to help the participants find their own answers	2	1	1		1	1	
10. As facilitator, to control interruptions and criticisms in group discussions	1		1				1
11. to help the participants grow in confidence and help them be more open to different options	1	1			1		

preparation stage with role plays of problem situations filmed on VCR for self evaluation.

Their increased confidence helped them take personal risks during the 4 months following Nouveau Départ. One of the facilitators enrolled in a university level course as a mature student, applied for work, received positive feedback on her résumé and was hired as a full-time volunteer coordinator. The second accepted a volunteer position as chairperson of a major committee and the third planned a publicity campaign to promote the personal development courses she offered in the community.

#### Coordinator's Evaluation

The coordinator reported having gained understanding of women in their middle years as a result of developing the new course content and of directing and evaluating the revised program (see Table 14). The many discussions with the facilitators and the participants provided evidence of the variability of people's lives and of the fact that midlife women are not a homogenous group. Their histories vary and so do their psychological resources and levels of coping skills.

The objective of reaching a full course enrolment of 24 participants, as set by Employment and Immigration, was not obtained. However, considering the smaller population we have to work with, an enrolment of 21 was assessed as successful by St. Boniface College.

As a team, the facilitators and coordinator shared a feminist approach based on the belief that women can assume responsibility for their own growth, can reach their own decisions and can take control of how they live through and resolve their life transitions.

TABLE 14

Evaluation of the Coordinator's Objectives in November 1985 and in March 1986.

	November 1985			March 1986		
	Met	Partially Met	Not Met	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
1. to develop the new content and try out the revised program	x			x		
2. to promote the program and achieve maximum enrolment of 24		x			x	
3. to build a team with the 3 facilitators	x			x		
4. to increase my understanding of mid-life women	x			x		
<u>By the end of the course:</u>						
5. each participant will have completed a résumé		x			x	
6. each participant will have decided on an option and developed a plan of action		x				x
7. the participants will have a better understanding of the process of transition		x			x	
8. the anxiety level regarding re-entering school or paid work will have been reduced	x				x	
9. the participants will have gained self-confidence	x				x	

It was assumed that by increasing the course length to 80 hours and by adding new content each participant would have decided on a goal and would have developed a strategy to reach that goal by the end of the program. This, of course, did not occur. Some participants had definite goals by the end of the program but most had only tentative plans. Considering all the variables that affect a person's adaptability to a transition as discussed in the literature review, it was unrealistic to expect that all individuals would respond with well laid out plans. This was expecting the participants to react as a homogenous group.

At the March evaluation, the coordinator was disappointed in the results and stated that most of her objectives had only been met partially or not at all. This reaction came as a result of the number of participants who had changed their goals because of obstacles and those who had dropped their plans and remained undecided. Since then, the coordinator has realized that too much had been expected as a result of the revisions of the orientation program and not enough consideration had been given to the many variables affecting the participants. The women came to Nouveau Départ with different histories, different needs and at different levels of readiness for change. While all had been socialized in the traditional role of wife and mother in the French Canadian culture, they differed in their level of autonomy and coping skills. Changes in attitude, in locus of control and in assertive behavior take time. Some women were ready to decide and act upon their decisions by the end of the program -- others were not. However, the process of introspection followed by reorganization and trial experiences continue over a long span of time.

A survey of the participants 11 months after Nouveau Départ ended, (see Table 15) revealed that many changes had occurred since March. Five women were employed on a full-time basis, five were working part-time, two were grieving the death of a parent, one was in the process of looking for paid work, and others were involved in volunteer activities, evening courses and personal development programs. As Golan (1978) and Schlossberg (1984) have stated, reactions and the ratio of resources to deficits can change over time and the individual's perspective can shift from a feeling of depression to one of hope and excitement thus affecting coping skills, behavior, attitude, and decision-making. The process of re-entry following a program should therefore be observed over a longer time span.

**TABLE 15**

Action taken by the Nouveau Départ participants as of October, 1986.

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<u>Action</u>	<u>No. of Participants</u>
1) full-time employment	5
2) part-time employment	5
3) full-time training program	1
4) evening courses	2
5) volunteer work	2
6) focus on personal development and bringing about changes in the home	4
7) presently looking for paid work	<u>1</u>
	N=20

## CONCLUSIONS

The revised program of Nouveau Départ provided a longer "time out" to the participants to better reflect on themselves and their options before making a decision. The added 35 hours of course time permitted a more in-depth presentation of content and a better integration of the material. Workshops on the transition process, on assertiveness training and on problem solving in addition to the many role plays of job and information interviews and the completion of résumés helped the participants gain self confidence, self awareness, and be better prepared for change. The revised program also helped them clarify their present life situations, understand their sources of stress, acquire skills, obtain necessary information, set realistic short term goals, identify obstacles and develop peer support systems.

The revised program had lasting effects for many participants. The four-month follow up evaluation revealed that 65% of the participants had either maintained or increased their level of confidence, and 75% had maintained the positive changes in self awareness, assertiveness, self worth and autonomy. In terms of decisions made, 35% remained committed to their original goals and 45% were able to reassess the situation and adapt their plans as obstacles were identified. Only 20% of the participants remained undecided.

The author concludes that a transition process model is an effective tool in the development of a course outline and its content and in the evaluation of a program. The model clarifies the steps involved in adapting to a transition in terms of the emotional reactions to loss and the tasks required for effective reorganization.



The re-entry transition process model developed by the author is incomplete. Two stages that were identified in the literature review **self doubt** and **inner preparation** need to be added. Many participants shared that they had experienced feelings of depression, fears, insecurity, anger, or sadness prior to accepting the necessity for change and taking action towards their goal. Hopson and Adams (1981) identify this stage as **self doubt** and state that the unleashed feelings have to be dealt with before acceptance can occur. This stage would be part of the introspection phase.

Based on the feedback from the participants regarding obstacles to change and the realization that much of the resistance to re-entry can be internal, the author concludes that Brooks' (1978) stage of **inner preparation** is a vital part of the process. This step involves a clarification of one's values and a resolution of the fears, the ambivalence, and the inner conflicts of a turning point. It is part of the reorganization phase.

Differences in styles of coping with career transition were identified by Brebner, Sundre (1982) and Ackerman (1984) and were also observed among the Nouveau Départ participants. Coping styles affect a person's willingness to take risks, her readiness to make decisions and her ability to deal with stress during a period of transition.

These differences are related to the individual's perceived or actual ratio of resources to deficits. Observation of the sample of 20 women and analysis of the evaluations revealed that the following resources are important for ease of adaptation to a transition: self confidence, self esteem, a sense of autonomy, psychological support from family and peers, good health and commitment to personal goals.

The following variables were also identified as assets to re-entry: recent paid work experiences outside the home, job-entry skills or post secondary education, problem solving and negotiation skills.

Many obstacles to re-entry were identified by the 20 Francophone women. One of the major obstacles appears to be the difficulty in committing oneself to personal goals. This difficulty seems to be related to socialization in a traditional role of wife and mother. A pattern of dependency and of focusing on others develops over the years. When considering a role change such as re-entry in the wage sector, a conflict arises between maintaining the traditional and cultural role and changing to a more liberated and autonomous role. Role conflict, fear of change and guilt feelings make it difficult for some women to commit themselves to personal goals.

Resistance from the husband and the children is a second obstacle that hinders and can even prevent re-entry.

For some of the women in the 50 to 60 age group, the combination of age, poor health and low educational level limited their options in the wage sector.

The lack of educational supports available in French in Manitoba was also identified as an obstacle. It was found that the High School Equivalency (GED) exam can be written in French but there is no French textbook or course offered in French to help the adult prepare for the exam. As well, there are no Adult Basic Education courses available in French for those Francophone women who wish to complete their high school education. Nouveau Départ is the only orientation program available to the French Canadian women in this province. Being a French Canadian woman living in a rural area becomes

a double obstacle to re-entry as there are limited French educational supports and limited job openings available in the rural area. The correspondence branch of the Manitoba Department of Education offers three high school courses "en français": (a) Typing, (b) History, and (c) Français. St. Boniface College offers French grammar and the University of Manitoba offers French Canadian Literature and French Composition by correspondence.

The current generation of homemakers in their middle years needs support in making the transition from housewife and mother to full time employee in the wage sector. Nouveau Départ, in its revised form, offers more adequate preparation and support. However, additional follow-up programs are needed for those women who wish to complete their education before re-entering the wage sector.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### The Revised Program of Nouveau Départ

It is recommended that the Nouveau Départ Corporation adopt the revised program because it offers a longer reflection time and more adequate preparation for change. It is felt that adoption of the revised program is particularly important for Manitoba and for other regions where there is a lack of resources for Francophones. In the province of Québec where Nouveau Départ originated, there are many follow-up programs available such as "Transition au Travail" for those women who wish to experience thorough preparation for re-entry in the wage sector. This is not the case in Manitoba where Nouveau Départ is the only orientation program available for Francophones.

It is recommended that the following changes be incorporated in the revised course design:

1. More time ought to be allowed during the second session for debriefing in subgroups following the presentations on family and intrapersonal changes. The time spent on discussion and presentation on social changes could be shortened.

2. The workbooks developed by Ekstrom (1981) and Sansregret (1985) should be used as resource materials at the third session on personal evaluation. The personal assessment of abilities, interests, needs and limitations is an important step in the orientation process. It is not an easy task since it requires the re-examination of a large volume of experience of past years. The workbook exercises would simplify the task and help the participants identify their

job-relevant skills and recognize their experiential learnings.

3. More time should be allowed at the seventh session for debriefing in subgroups following the presentation on the transition process because the participants need more time to assimilate this input.

4. Additional information interviews should be assigned as homework because they would provide opportunities to practice assertive and information retrieval skills. They would satisfy the participants' needs for specific information, would expose them to more options, and would also help them gain self confidence.

5. A work project in the wage sector should be organized for those participants who have no recent experience in working outside the home. This idea of a work project is supported by Brooks (1978) who states that inner preparation for re-entry is not fully resolved without engaging in trial experiences of paid work or study.

6. In evaluating future programs of Nouveau Départ, the re-entry transition process should be observed over a longer time span of 12 to 18 months because a person's ratio of resources to deficits fluctuates over time, and changes occur in the level of self confidence, commitment and readiness for change.

7. Husbands or significant others should be involved in a limited way either through a letter or a mini-session to give them information regarding the midlife and re-entry transition processes and to discuss with them the impact of these transitions on the family and the importance of their support.

8. At the end of the program, the participants could be encouraged to form a committee to ensure follow-up activities such as a

support group, a monthly meeting and/or a newsletter to meet the participants' ongoing needs.

### **Adult Basic Education**

It is recommended that an Adult Basic Education course be developed in French and offered in the urban and rural centers of high Francophone population because successful re-entry is determined in part by the educational level, and many participants in Nouveau Départ had not completed their high school education.

### **Additional Research**

It is recommended that studies be made of the effect of socialization, in the French Canadian family, on the achievement patterns of midlife women and their daughters. This research is needed to reflect changing patterns as more midlife homemakers re-enter the wage sector. Research on rural women isolated from needed resources is also required in order to better understand their situation and to provide adequate institutional supports.

It is recommended that the Church's influence on women's life choices in the Francophone community be explored because some women in rural areas may not enroll in Nouveau Départ unless it is sanctioned by the local priest. Studies could reveal to what extent women are being influenced by the Church and how messages from the Church concerning women's roles are being conveyed.

It is recommended that the significance of sleep as part of

the transition process needs exploration. In many stories told about transitions that occurred when the youngest child entered school, women reported having slept more than normal over a period of time prior to reaching a major decision and reorganizing their lives. Could this sleep be a symptom of depression, or a basic need for physical and mental rest after having stored fatigue for many years?

### **Changes in Society**

It is recommended that support groups be organized for women who have chosen to be home with their children. Such groups would provide moral support and opportunities for personal growth, problem solving and program development to meet individual needs.

It is recommended that a Canada Pension Plan for homemakers be created as a way of recognizing the value of motherwork in society.

It is recommended that employers accept volunteer community work and home management as valid experience when hiring employees.

It is recommended that job entry projects sponsored by Canada Employment and Immigration be expanded to allow more midlife homemakers the opportunity to re-enter the wage sector via effective training programs and meaningful jobs.

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**A P P E N D I C E S**



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## APPENDIX A

### Form of Consent

Chère \_\_\_\_\_

Pour mieux répondre aux besoins des participantes et assurer une orientation plus adéquate, le programme Nouveau Départ a été révisé. Le développement et l'intégration des nouvelles sessions feront partie de mon projet de maîtrise avec l'Université du Manitoba.

Ce projet requiert que vous complétiez une évaluation après chacune des rencontres et une évaluation globale avec un questionnaire à la fin du cours.

Toute information recueillie sera confidentielle et sera présentée à base de groupe, afin d'assurer l'anonymat des signatures.

S'il vous plaît, indiquez votre consentement par votre signature ci-dessous.

Merci de votre collaboration!

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Rita Lécuyer)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature de consentement)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

RL/cs

## APPENDIX B

## A Comparison of the Original and Revised Course Design

<u>Original Design</u>	<u>Revised Design</u>
1. Orientation	1. Orientation intro: Transition Process
2. Social Changes Identifying needs	2. Social Changes Family Life Cycle Intrapersonal change and midlife transition
3. Personal Evaluation	3. Personal Evaluation
4. Implications of Change	4. Implications of Change
5. Achieving Autonomy	5. A. Achieving Autonomy B. Orientation to College Library
6. Coping with failure and obstacles. Process evaluation.	6. Assertiveness Training
7. Exploring the world of work	7. A. The transitions in our lives B. Program Evaluation C. Intro to employment option
8. Resumes and job interviews.	8. A. Tour of Employment Centre B. Information interview
9. Returning to school	9. A. Employer survey results B. Writing a resume
10. Volunteer work	10. Job interviews, panel of employers and role plays
11. Achieving identity within the home	11. A. Returning to school B. Tour of W.E.C.C.
12. Planning action, evaluation celebration	12. A. Starting a small enterprise B. Orientation to St. Boniface College and University
	13. A. Volunteer work B. Holland's Self-Directed Search
	14. A. Problem Solving & Decision Making B. Resolving Conflicts Achieving identity in the home
	15. Planning Action & coping with obstacles and failure
	16. Evaluation, feedback celebration
 Total Time = 45 hours	 Total Time = 80 hours

\* **BOLD** type original program  
 \* REGULAR type revisions

APPENDIX C

Revised Course Outline

Session 1: General Orientation

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
1.1 to allow the participants to get to know each other and start the process of joining	- Content provided by participants from their life experiences as they get to know each other.	1.a) Each leader greets the members of her group. Name tags. <u>Ice breaker</u> = conversation starters using the following questions: 1) Your name and nickname(s) and stories related. 2) Where were you born? 3) What is your favorite passtime? 4) If you received a cheque of \$500 tomorrow and could spend it only <u>on yourself</u> , what would you do? 5) What is one life experience that has helped you blossom? 6) Complete the sentence: I've always dreamed of _____ .  1.b) Answers shared over coffee in sub-groups.  1.c) Each participant is asked to greet 3 participants from the other 2 groups and to share their answers to three of the above questions.



**Session 1: General Orientation**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
1.2 to allow participants to express their feelings and concerns re: Nouveau Départ, to lower anxiety level	- Participants express their fears, anxieties and questions related to taking Nouveau Départ	2. Participants are encouraged to express their fears and concerns and to raise questions regarding Nouveau Départ.  Time = 1.5 hrs.
1.3 to introduce the transition model	- Transition process model	3. Illustrate Transition Model. Brainstorm for changes that will occur as a result of new role as students on a 2 day/week course.  Time = 30 mins.
1.4 to present an overview of the program Nouveau Départ	- Nouveau Départ and its philosophy, goals and content.	4. Presentation of course content using transition process model to show the flow from introspection to planning action.  Time = 30 mins.
1.5 to clarify the role of the group facilitators	- Handout on role of group leader facilitator.	5. In sub-groups to discuss and clarify the role of the leader.
1.6 to establish and discuss rules affecting participation	Rules of confidentiality  - the right to share and to pass - each person is responsible for deciding what is a "secret" and what can be shared	6. In groups to discuss rules and add new ones if group wishes.  Time = 30 mins.

Session 1: General Orientation

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
1.7 to learn to communicate through the use of pictures		7. Photo language = Participants are given 10 minutes to look at a series of pictures and to select 2 which answer the questions: "Who am I?" and "Why am I here? What are my objectives?"
1.8 to share our reasons for enrolling in Nouveau Départ		8. <u>Plenary</u> : Each group presents its list of objectives. These are compared to the course objectives. Review in greater detail of 6 first sessions. In small groups to evaluate.  2 hrs.

Session 2: Social Change and Personal Change

2.1 to become aware of the changes around us and their effect on our lives	- Changes at the world, national, provincial, and local levels.  Social changes affecting the family.	Warm up: Greet 3 people and share 3 changes that have affected you in the last 5 years.  1. Brainstorm for changes: plenary with resource person. ref.: Bardwick, J. (1979) <u>In transition</u> , NY:Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.  Note the changes that have had a positive effect and those that have had a negative effect on the community, family, etc.  Time: 1 hr.
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**Session 2: Social Change and Personal Change**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
<p>2.2 to understand the stages of the family cycle and identify sources of stress</p>	<p>- Family life cycle:            a) courtship            b) commitment            c) first child is born            d) sharing of influence with other authorities when oldest child enters school            e) sharing authority with adolescents and their peers            f) launching stage: one child leaves home            g) grand-parent stage            h) intensification of 2 party system at retirement            i) return to single life at death of spouse</p>	<p>2.a) Photo presentation of the different stages.            b) Invite comments from participants regarding time usage, developmental tasks, specific issues, stress on couple and parent child relationship.</p> <p>ref.: Okun, B., Rappaport, L.J., (1980)  <u>Working with Families: An introduction to Family Therapy.</u> Duxbury Press=Wadsworth Inc.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">45 mins.</p> <p>c) Individual work:            Participants are asked to identify their family life stage and sources of stress.</p> <p>d) In dyads to share.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">30 mins.</p>

**Session 2: Social Change and Personal Change**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
2.3 to become aware of intrapersonal stress in the process of growth and change	<p>Tricycle theory: (Symor 1976)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The relationship between task wheel, I wheel and group wheel.</li> <li>- How the self is affected by change such as the loss of a role.</li> <li>- Midlife search for self.</li> </ul>	<p>3.a) Tricycle theory: ref.: Symor, N. (1977) <u>The Dependency Cycle and Life Positions, and Tricycle Theory</u></p> <p>b) Individual work: Participants draw their own tricycle in dyads.</p> <p>c) Sharing in dyads.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Time = 1 hr.</p>
2.4 to become aware of change at midlife		<p>4. Discussion of changes that occur at midlife. Presentation of studies done on midlife women.</p> <p>ref.: Sheehy, G. (1976) <u>Predictable Crisis of Adult Life</u>. Dutton &amp; Co. <u>Passages:</u>  Rubin, L. (1979) Harper and Row. <u>Women of a Certain Age:</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">30 mins.</p>
2.5 to identify personal needs at this time of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maslow's hierarchy of needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation</li> <li>- Questionnaire</li> <li>- Debriefing in groups</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">1 hr.</p>

**Session 3: Personal Evaluation**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
3.1 to gain self confidence		1. <u>Warm-up</u> = Greet someone and share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one thing you enjoyed about your weekend</li> <li>- one thing that frustrated you</li> <li>- how you earned your first dollar</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">15 mins.</p>
3.2 to identify likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses	- Participants provide content: experience of work and leisure activities in the home, outside the home, in the community, etc.	2. Individual work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- complete inventory of work and volunteer leisure experiences</li> <li>- identify pattern of reasons for likes and dislikes</li> <li>- share learnings in groups</li> </ul>
3.3 to gain awareness of self and self-concept	- the development of a positive/negative self-concept. Influences: parents, school, peers, etc.	3. Exercises on self image and self-concept.
3.4 to give and receive feedback from other members of sub-group		4. Feedback exercise: assign roles to participants as crew members on a ship.

**Session 4: The Implication of Change on the Family Dynamics**

resource person: Thérèse Châtelain

**Session 5A: Autonomy**

resource person: Raymonde Dorge

**Session 5B: Orientation to the St. Boniface College Library**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
5.1 to learn how to find information in the library	- the use of author or title index  - finding books or magazines in the library stacks	1. In groups of 8, tour the library with resource person: Madeleine Samida.  Allow time to look through books related to what has been discussed so far in program.
5.2 to apply for a library card		2. Each participant applies for a library card and is familiarized with the library rules.

**Session 6: Assertiveness**

6.1 to learn the three forms of communication that will be used in the workshop	General introduction:  - 3 forms of communication: observation, thoughts and assumptions, feelings - using I language versus You language - feedback based on observation versus assumption or impressions - verifying our assumptions to eliminate problems	1. Illustrate 3 forms of communication with 3 volunteers.  A reports what she sees when looking at B. B reports what she thinks when looking at C. C reports what she feels when looking at A.  Discussion on dealing with assumptions.
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**Session 6: Assertiveness**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
6.2 to learn how to give and receive feedback based on observation of non-verbal		<p>2. <u>Feedback exercise:</u></p> <p>In triads: A person picks a topic and speaks to B for 1½ minutes. B listens attentively and makes no comments. B speaks to C for 1½ minutes and C speaks to A.</p> <p>In the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the exercise, each person in turn gives positive feedback to the person they listened to on how the speaker kept their attention and their interest, ex. voice, gesture, facial expression, etc. Debrief in subgroups.</p>
6.3 to learn how to give and receive a compliment		<p>3. Giving and receiving a compliment. In groups of 5: each in turn gives a compliment to the person sitting to the right. The receiver responds to the compliment in an assertive way. The second time around, each shares what she liked about the way her compliment was received. Debrief in subgroups.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">3 hrs.</p>
6.4 to understand the difference between non-assertive, aggressive, and assertive behavior	<p>Definition and comparison in terms of inner attitude and exterior behavior: self-concept, greatest fears, beliefs, tone of voice, posture, eye contact, etc.</p>	<p>4.a) In 3 groups: each group is assigned the task of describing one of the behaviors in terms of exterior reactions and interior attitude.</p> <p>b) Plenary: each group reports back.</p> <p>c) Discussion of situations in which assertive behavior can be very useful.</p>

**Session 6: Assertiveness**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
	The use of assertiveness in specific situations: - job search - setting personal goals - working on developing a positive self-concept	ref.: 1. Lange, A.J., Jakerbowski, P. (1976) <u>Responsible Assertive Behavior.</u> 2. Chalvin, D. (1980) <u>L'Affirmation de soi.</u> <p style="text-align: right;">2 hrs.</p>

**Session 7A: Transitions in Our Lives and How We Process Change**

7.1 to identify different transitions and understand the process of change	Normative, expected transitions, non-transitions, and crisis events in the life cycle.	Warm up exercise - confidence builder 1.a) Mini presentation based on Keleman's view of life as a series of turning points. b) Brainstorm for normative and expected transitions. c) Examples of unexpected, non-transitions and crisis events.
7.2 to identify our sources of strength and support that helped us in the past to cope with transitions		2. <u>Individual exercise:</u> - Participant selects a past transition that can be analysed. - Resource Person guides the analysis with questions. - Identify triggering event, feelings and behavior at different stages. - Identify support systems, actions, etc. that helped them at the time to accept change and reorganize their life. - Sharing in dyads. - <u>Plenary session</u> = Sharing in a general way to build our understanding of transition process based on what we have experienced.



**Session 7A: Transitions in Our Lives and How We Process Change**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources <u>Warm up exercise - confidence builder</u>
7.3 to understand the process of transition in midlife career change	Presentation of the transition Model: - Introspection - Reorganization - Decision making - Action Planning	3. Transition Model for career change presented and discussed.  4. Debriefing in sub-groups.  Time = 3 hrs.

**Session 7B: Evaluation; Orientation to the Exploration of the World of Paid Work**

7B.1 to evaluate the program and assess whether it is meeting the participant's objectives		1. Participants complete evaluation questionnaire.  15 mins.
7B.2 to recognize the contributions of women's work in the home, on the farm, in private enterprise, etc.	2. Video = Presentation of the work women are doing as seamstress, farm wife, business owner and manager, mother, etc. Discussion of problems encountered: lack of recognition of motherwork and farmwork, low wages, difficulties in obtaining loans, financial autonomy.	2. Video presentation: "çoute que çoute".

**Session 7B: Evaluation; Orientation to the Exploration of the World of Paid Work**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
7B.3 to explore women's attitudes towards money and towards motherwork		<p>3. Discussion of women's attitudes towards their work, towards money and towards outside work.</p> <p>Description of the coming sessions on the exploration of options.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1.5 hrs.</p>

**Session 8A: Exploration of the Wage Sector**

8.1 to visit an employment centre and feel more at ease using their services	- services and programs of CMC	1. A visit to the St. Boniface Canada Employment Centre.
8.2 to gain information re: services provided at a Canada Employment Centre and how to use these services	- job bank and how to use it	2. Resource person: Joanne Dandenault Explains services available answers and questions. Visit job bank.
8.3 to gain awareness of the importance of a positive attitude in a job interview	- video on job interviews and differing attitudes	3. Presents video on job interviews. Questions and discussions.

2.5 hrs.

**Session 8B: The Information Interview**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
8B.1 the participants will learn how to conduct an information interview	What is an information interview? When to use it. Steps involved: 1. request to speak to owner or manager (ask for name) 2. greeting and self introduction 3. statement of purpose of the interview 4. request for time 5. interview questions and subquestions for clarification 6. paraphrase to verify understanding 7. end the interview	1. Presentation of the information interview.
8B.2 each participant will practice doing an interview		2.a) Assign task: survey of employers to find out what they expect from their employees and what they look for in an interview. b) Demonstrate interview using role play. c) In triads to practice interview using steps. d) Debrief.
8B.3 each participant will do 2 interviews and report back to the class		3. Assign task a) interview 2 employers b) report results of interview at Session 9. c) discuss reactions to task and obstacles

2 hrs.

**Session 9: Employee Expectations; the Curriculum Vitae**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
9.1 each participant will report back on her experience with the information interview	- content supplied by participants and their interview results	1.a) In groups to share and discuss interview experience. b) Each sub-group compiles results.
9.2 to compile the results of the survey on employer expectations		2.a) Plenary: each group assigns spokeswoman and reports back on their survey results re: 3 most important factors considered by employers. b) Discussion. 1 hr.
9.3 to learn how to prepare a curriculum vitae	- What is a C.V. - Organizing the information - Different ways of presenting the information - Using a C.V.	3.a) Mini presentation on C.V. b) Distribution of samples of C.V. and discussion. 1 hr.
9.4 to give time and assistance to participants in the writing of their C.V.		4.a) Workshop. In 3 groups depending on work experience: 1. full-time homemaking 2. homemaking and farm work 3. homemaking and clerical or other work 2 hrs. b) Debriefing, questions.

**Session 9: Employee Expectations; the Curriculum Vitae**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
9.5 to prepare participants for job interviews		5. Description of activities on day 10. Hand out of reading material on job interviews.  Ref.: Lalonde, G. (1980). <u>L'Emploi Idéale en 4 minutes</u> . L'homme.

**Session 10: The Job Interview**

10.1 participants will prepare questions for panel members to control the input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hiring procedures of different organizations</li> <li>- where the information is posted</li> <li>- how to apply</li> <li>- what is looked for</li> <li>- job interviews</li> </ul>	1.a) Brainstorm for questions to ask panel members. b) Put questions in order. c) Determine who will ask what question.  30 mins.
10.2 to learn what the hiring procedures are in 3 different organizations and what the employer expectations are		2. Invite employers from 3 organizations:  St. Boniface Hospital = over 1,000 employees St. Boniface Cultural Centre = 30 - 50 employees A restaurant owner = 10 - 20 employees  PANEL DISCUSSION  1 hr.

**Session 10: The Job Interview**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
10.3 to gain practical experience as interviewee		3.a) In 3 groups in separate classrooms, each employer conducts a job interview with a volunteer candidate. Other women become observers. Feedback. 1 hr.  b) Each participant gets the opportunity to be interviewed and to receive feedback. 2 hrs.

**Session 11A: Exploration of Education as an Option**

Panel presentation of 4 women in the 35-55 age range who completed their education.  
Discussion of fears and attractions of returning to school. Opportunities for mature students.

3 hrs.

**Session 11B:**

- to gain awareness of other community resources

- A visit to the Women's Employment Counselling Centre.  
Resource person: Lucille Wiltshire

1.5 hrs.

**Session 12A: Starting A Small Enterprise**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
12A.1 to gain confidence in speaking about self		1. In dyads, participants practice answering question "Tell me about yourself".  15 mins.
12A.2 to gain awareness of small enterprises administered by women		2. Mini presentation on option of starting a business: advantages/disadvantages.  30 mins.  Sharing of experience within the group of running small businesses and/or selling.  Panel: 3 women entrepreneur share their experience and answer questions  1 hr.
12A.3 to be informed of how a small business is started and what resources are available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- market survey</li> <li>- marketing skills</li> <li>- advantage/disadvantage</li> <li>- financial aid</li> <li>- resources</li> <li>- permits</li> <li>- training courses available</li> </ul>	3. Joan Rogers: Business Development Consultant. Presentation, questions and answers.  1 hr.  Ref.: Guide de gestion de la petite entreprise (1980), Fédération Canadienne de l'Entreprise Indépendante.

**Session 12B: Orientation to St. Boniface University and Community College**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
12B.1 to gain information re: courses available at University and Community level	Information: - bilingual secretary - word processing - translation certificate - child care worker - education - arts and science - employment possibilities - prerequisites, mature student plan, adult upgrading programs GED	1 & 2 Resource person: Raymonde Gagné, Director of Community College
12B.2 to be informed of mature student plan and upgrading courses and GED		
12B.3 to visit classrooms, enrolment office, computer centre		3. Tour of college.  Participants presented to staff in registration office.  4. Debrief <span style="float: right;">1.5 hrs.</span>

**Session 13A: Volunteer Community Work - A Way of Testing Choices**



**Session 13B: Holland's Self Directed Search**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
13B.1 to assist participants in their career search by using Holland's questionnaire	Holland's 6 personality types: - Realistic - Enterprising - Investigative - Artistic - Social - Conventional	1. Mini presentation of the Holland search.  Each participant answers questionnaire and identifies codes.
13B.2 to gain awareness of individual differences and the 6 personality types	Use hexagon to show similarities and differences among the types, among jobs and between people and jobs: Discuss jobs with: - consistent or compatible codes - intermediate codes - inconsistent codes	2. Explanation of codes and discussion of 6 personalities and environments.
13B.3 to gain awareness of job consistency or compatibility		3. Exercise of identifying codes for multi-tasks of homemaker role.  Discussion of job consistency and compatibility.  Debriefing. <span style="float: right;">2 hrs.</span>  Ref.: Cramer, S. H. and Herr, E. L., (1979) <u>Career Guidance and Counselling Through The Life Span.</u> Little, Brown & Company, Toronto

**Session 14: Problem Solving: Decision Making: Negotiating**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
14.1 to learn the steps of effective problem solving	<p><u>Steps</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understanding the problem.</li> <li>2. Inventory of facts that point to a problem.</li> <li>3. My assumptions.</li> <li>4. Defining the goal.</li> <li>5. Identifying all possible solutions.</li> <li>6. Developing a value hierarchy.</li> <li>7. Evaluating the solutions.</li> <li>8. Choosing a course of action.</li> <li>9. Implementing the course of action.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.a) Overview of problem solving.</li> <li>b) Select a situation to work through.</li> <li>c) Have one of the group leaders play the role of the woman who owns the problem and ask her to clarify information and values (steps 1-6).</li> <li>d) Work through the steps.</li> </ol>
14.2 using the above steps, to work through a personal problem		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <u>Individual work</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Each participant uses the steps to work through a personal problem.</li> <li>b) In dyads for feedback.</li> <li>c) Debriefing in sub-groups.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
		<p>Ref.: Carkhuff, R. <u>The Art of Problem Solving</u> (1973)</p>
		<p>2 hrs.</p>

**Session 14: Problem Solving: Decision Making: Negotiating**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
14.3 to consider the risks of change and no change in decision making	<p>Are the risks serious if I don't change?            Are the risks serious if I do change?            Is it realistic to hope to find a better solution?            Is there sufficient time to search and deliberate?</p>	<p>3.a) Mini presentation on decision making.            b) Individual consideration of questions re: risks.            c) Identifying obstacles to change.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">30 mins.</p>
14.4 to learn a no-lose method of resolving conflicts	<p>Thomas Gordon's no-lose method:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify problems and unmet needs.</li> <li>2. Set an appointment.</li> <li>3. Describe problem and needs.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) unacceptable behavior</li> <li>b) feelings and thoughts</li> <li>c) consequences</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Partner checks back.</li> <li>5. Solicit partner's needs.</li> <li>6. Paraphrase.</li> <li>7. Negotiate a solution.</li> </ol>	<p>4.a) Mini presentation on Gordon's no-lose approach.            b) Role play of a conflict resolution situation.            c) In triads to role play and try out the steps in conflict resolution.            d) Plenary discussion.</p> <p>Ref.: Gordon, T.,  <u>Parent Effectiveness Training</u>, 1970.            N.Y.:Wyden</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1.5 hrs.</p>

**Session 14: Problem Solving: Decision Making: Negotiating**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
14.5 to practise negotiating by reaching a consensus		5.a) In 3 groups to plan luncheon for last session. b) Negotiating committee set up - spokeswoman from each group.  20 mins.
14.6 to become aware of our involvement in decision making process in the home		6. Handout of questionnaires re: budget, salaries, wills, insurance, etc. to determine our involvement in decision making. To be answered at home.  30 mins.

**Session 15: Planning Action**

15.1 to verify where people are at		1. In groups to share what is happening in terms of problem solving, plans, obstacles, etc.
15.2 to learn how to build a plan of action	<p><u>Assessment of 5 areas</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. physical: health and appearance</li> <li>2. geographical: travel and transportation</li> <li>3. financial: course fees, wardrobe, etc.</li> <li>4. family: preparing for change, work distribution, involvement</li> <li>5. training: skills required</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.a) Mini presentation on building a plan of action and setting short-term and long-term goals.</li> <li>b) Individual work on their own plan of action and the 5 areas of assessment.</li> <li>c) Work in dyads for feedback.</li> <li>d) Sharing and discussion in sub-groups.</li> </ol> 3 hrs.

**Session 15: Planning Action**

Objectives	Content	Instructional Strategies and Resources
15.3 to consider the possible consequences: success or failure	refer to session 6 of the original program	<p>3. Discussion of the possible outcomes = success and failure. In the event of failure, possible actions that can be undertaken. Learnings and growth that can arise from our failures.</p>
15.4 to reach a consensus re luncheon plans.		<p>4.a) Negotiating committee meets to share ideas and information. Negotiators return to their sub-groups for feedback; reach a consensus. b) Once the consensus has been reached, tasks are delegated.</p>

1 hr.

**Session 16: Evaluation, Feedback, Sharing of Plans, Celebration**

16.1 to evaluate the revised program		<p>1.a) Written evaluation completed by participants. b) In groups to discuss and make recommendations.</p>
16.2 to give and receive positive feedback		<p>2.a) Feedback exercise: "What I've appreciated about you..." in sub-groups. b) <b>Photolanguage: participants select pictures which illustrate personal changes that have occurred.</b></p>
16.3 to share plans with the total group		<p>3. Plenary session: each participant talks about her future plans and is presented with a certificate.</p>
16.4 to celebrate together our new beginning		<p>4. Lunch and festivities.</p>

## APPENDIX D

Evaluation completed on October 21, 1985

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Enrollment Objectives

I. When you enrolled in Nouveau Départ, your objectives were:

- . to gain self-understanding \_\_\_\_\_
- . to gain or regain confidence in myself \_\_\_\_\_
- . to gain a sense of self-worth \_\_\_\_\_
- . to take charge of my life and gain autonomy \_\_\_\_\_
- . to establish contact outside the home \_\_\_\_\_
- . to complete my studies \_\_\_\_\_
- . to get information on all possible options \_\_\_\_\_
- . to get support from others who are undergoing  
the same experience \_\_\_\_\_
- . to prepare myself to find a paying job that  
interests me \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D - continued

Enrollment Objectives

II. Indicate to what extent Nouveau Départ has helped you meet your objectives:

	yes	partially	no
. to gain self-understanding	_____	_____	_____
. to gain or regain confidence in myself	_____	_____	_____
. to take charge of my life and gain autonomy	_____	_____	_____
. to establish contact outside the home	_____	_____	_____
. to complete my studies	_____	_____	_____
. to get information on all possible options	_____	_____	_____
. to get support from others who are undergoing the same experience	_____	_____	_____

III. Have your objectives changed?

yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_

IV. If so, what are your new objectives?

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## APPENDIX E

Questionnaire completed at the end of the program  
and four months later

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Nouveau Départ

It has been four months since you completed the program Nouveau Départ. You can now look back and give us some information on the value of this program. Your feedback will allow us to assess and improve the program.

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**I. Your objectives in taking Nouveau Départ were:**

1. to gain self-understanding \_\_\_\_\_
2. to gain or regain confidence in myself \_\_\_\_\_
3. to gain a sense of self-worth \_\_\_\_\_
4. to take charge of my life and gain autonomy \_\_\_\_\_
5. to establish contact outside the home \_\_\_\_\_
6. to complete my studies \_\_\_\_\_
7. to get information on all possible options \_\_\_\_\_
8. to get support from others who are undergoing  
the same experience \_\_\_\_\_
9. to prepare myself to find a paying job that  
interests me \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX E - continued

Enrollment Objectives

II. Indicate to what extent Nouveau Départ has helped you meet your objectives:

	yes	partially	no
1. to gain self-understanding	_____	_____	_____
2. to gain or regain confidence in myself	_____	_____	_____
3. to gain a sense of self-worth	_____	_____	_____
4. to take charge of my life and gain autonomy	_____	_____	_____
5. to establish contact outside the home	_____	_____	_____
6. to complete my studies	_____	_____	_____
7. to get information on all possible options	_____	_____	_____
8. to get support from others who are undergoing the same experience	_____	_____	_____
9. to prepare myself to find a paying job that interests me	_____	_____	_____
10. _____	_____	_____	_____
11. _____	_____	_____	_____
12. _____	_____	_____	_____

## APPENDIX E - continued

III. We would like to know what changes in attitude and behavior have occurred as a result of your participation in Nouveau Départ. Indicate where you situated yourself at the end of the program and where you situate yourself now by using the following ranking.

A. Changes in myself

1 - not at all  
2 - some  
3 - more or less

4 - a fair amount  
5 - sufficiently  
6 - very much

	at the end of N.D.	now
. I have confidence in myself	_____	_____
. I can conquer my shyness	_____	_____
. I feel more autonomous and think more of me	_____	_____
. I know my strengths and aptitudes	_____	_____
. I can make a decision	_____	_____
. I can talk about myself in a positive way	_____	_____
. I can ask directly when I need help or information	_____	_____
. I have a greater sense of worth in my role as a homemaker	_____	_____

B. Changes in the family

1. My relationship with my husband has improved \_\_\_\_\_
2. My relationship with my children has improved \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX E - continued

**C. Acquired skills**

What skills have you acquired during the program?

	<u>not at all</u>	<u>a fair amount</u>	<u>very much</u>	<u>acquired before N.D.</u>
a - give and receive a compliment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b - prepare a curriculum vitae	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c - answer job interview questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d - initiate an information interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e - solve a problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f - negotiate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g - develop a plan of action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h - assert myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**D. Have you received sufficient information on the following topics?**

1 - insufficient

2 - a little

3 - good quantity

4 - all the necessary  
information

1. Resources available at an Employment Centre	1	2	3	4
2. Employers' expectations	1	2	3	4
3. Job search methods	1	2	3	4
4. The employment interview	1	2	3	4
5. Completing your studies	1	2	3	4
6. Starting a small business	1	2	3	4
7. The process of transition (change)	1	2	3	4

Do you feel capable of pursuing your own search for further  
information?

yes no

## APPENDIX E - continued

## IV. Have you made a decision regarding what you would like to do now?

Yes -  
answer question A

No -  
answer question B

A. YES

Which option(s) have you selected?

- |                                       |                          |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Full time work                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Starting a small business          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Part time work                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Education                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| secondary _____                       |                          |
| community college _____               |                          |
| university _____                      |                          |
| 5. Volunteer work                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Other personal development courses | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Changes in the home                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Homemaking with no changes         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Other (specify) _____              | <input type="checkbox"/> |

B. NO

If you haven't decided, what are the obstacles?

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 1. I have insufficient information to orient myself    | _____ |
| 2. I am not yet ready to undertake a change            | _____ |
| 3. I have other personal problems to deal with         | _____ |
| 4. I have met obstacles that are too great to overcome | _____ |
| 5. Other (specify) _____                               | _____ |

## C. What actions have you already undertaken to reach your goals?

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## APPENDIX E - continued

**V. To achieve your goals, what obstacles will you have to overcome?**

- no obstacles  
 the lack of determination  
 the lack of support form my husband  
 the lack of support from my children  
 the lack of support from others living under the same roof  
 the lack of support from my friends  
 my lack of educational training  
 my lack of personal financial resources  
 the lack of resources in my area  
 isolation  
 geographical distance  
 health problems  
 the fear of changing  
 other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. Rank order your greatest obstacles starting with the most important one.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**VII. Which factors will help you achieve your goals?**

- my determination  
 my husband's support  
 my children's support  
 support from someone living under the same roof  
 the support of my friends  
 the opportunities available in my area  
 my financial independance  
 my educational training  
 my work experience  
 other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX E - continued

VIII. Which part of the course was the most worthwhile to you? Rank in order of importance:

1 (most worthwhile), 2, 3, 4 (least worthwhile).

\_\_\_\_\_ the personal development segment

\_\_\_\_\_ the information on options

\_\_\_\_\_ the job search techniques

\_\_\_\_\_ the group support

IX. Would you recommend this course to others?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not sure \_\_\_\_\_

X. What kind of follow-up activity would be useful to you?

1. a support group \_\_\_\_\_

2. a monthly meeting \_\_\_\_\_

3. a newsletter \_\_\_\_\_

4. other...(specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for answering this questionnaire. Your comments and reactions will help us evaluate the program.

## A P P E N D I X F

**The Group Facilitators' Objectives (N=3)**


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1)	to contribute to the revision of the program	1
2)	to work as a team with the other facilitators and coordinator	1
3)	to gain an understanding of the francophone milieu	1
4)	to develop my skills as peer counsellor and facilitator	3
5)	to learn and develop organisational skills	1
6)	to continue to grow in self understanding and self-confidence	3
7)	to continue to grow towards autonomy	1
8)	to provide active listening and support to the participants in my group	2
9)	to help the participants find their own answers	2
10)	as facilitator, to control interruptions and criticisms in the group discussions	1
11)	to help the participants grow in confidence and help them be more open to different options	1

**The Coordinator's Objectives**

- 
- 
- 1) to develop the new content and try out the revised program
  - 2) to promote the program and achieve maximum enrolment of 24
  - 3) to build a team with the 3 facilitators
  - 4) to increase my understanding of mid-life women  
By the end of the course:
  - 5) that each participant will have completed a resume
  - 6) that each participant will have decided on an option and developed a plan of action
  - 7) that the participants will have a better understanding of the process of transition
  - 8) that the anxiety level regarding re-entering school or paid work will have been reduced.
  - 9) that the participants will have gained self-confidence

## APPENDIX G

Participants' responses to the statements in question IIIA of the November, 1985 and March, 1986 evaluation.

SCALE USED: 1 - not at all                      3 - more or less                      5 - much  
2 - some    4 - a fair amount                      6 - very much

## 1. I have confidence in myself.

Participant	a	b	c	d
	Before N.D.	End of N.D.	End of N.D.	4 Mo. Later
A	2	6	4	6
B	3	4	5	5
C	2	*	3	3
D	6	6	4	4
E	2	5	5	4
F	3	4	5	5
G	2	6	4	4
H	3	5	6	3
I	3	5	6	6
J	4	5	5	4
K	2	5	4	5
L	2	5	6	2
M	3	5	4	5
N	5	**	4	4
O	**	**	6	6
P	2	5	3	5
Q	4	6	**	**
R	1	3	4	3
S	2	4	2	3
T	3	6	6	3
Average	2.84	5.0	4.53	4.21
	N=19	N=17	N=19	N=19

## 2. I can conquer my shyness.

Participant	a	b	c	d
	Before N.D.	End of N.D.	End of N.D.	4 Mo. Later
A	3	5	3	5
B	4	5	5	4
C	1	**	6	6
D	5	6	4	5
E	3	5	5	3
F	3	5	4	4
G	2	6	5	5
H	5	6	5	5
I	3	5	4	5
J	5	6	5	5
K	2	4	3	3
L	1	3	5	6
M	3	5	5	5
N	5	**	4	5
O	**	**	5	5
P	2	4	3	3
Q	4	6	**	**
R	2	4	3	2
S	1	**	2	3
T	2	5	6	2
Average	2.95	5.0	4.32	4.26
	N=19	N=16	N=19	N=19

## 3. I feel more autonomous and think more of me.

Participant	a	b	c	d
	Before N.D.	End of N.D.	End of N.D.	4 Mo. Later
A	4	6	3	6
B	4	4	4	5
C	1	**	5	5
D	2	5	4	5
E	3	5	5	5
F	3	4	3	3
G	2	5	3	3
H	3	5	6	6
I	4	5	5	6
J	5	5	5	6
K	4	4	4	5
L	3	6	5	6
M	4	5	6	6
N	5	**	4	5
O	**	**	5	5
P	1	4	4	5
Q	2	4	*	*
R	2	5	4	4
S	4	5	3	4
T	3	5	5	3
Average	3.11	4.82	4.37	4.20
	N=19	N=17	N=19	N=19

## 4. I know my strengths and aptitudes.

Participant	a	b	c	d
	Before N.D.	End of N.D.	End of N.D.	4 Mo. Later
A	3	6	4	6
B	4	5	5	5
C	1	**	6	6
D	4	6	5	5
E	3	5	4	5
F	3	4	**	**
G	2	6	3	3
H	3	6	4	5
I	3	5	6	6
J	5	5	4	6
K	4	5	4	4
L	3	6	5	6
M	2	5	4	4
N	4	**	4	5
O	**	**	5	5
P	2	3	3	5
Q	4	6	**	4
R	2	4	3	3
S	3	5	2	3
T	5	6	6	5
Average	3.16	5.18	4.28	4.79
	N=19	N=17	N=18	N=19

a, b = responses in column a and b were given on November 21, 1985.

c, d = responses in column c and d were given on March 21, 1986.

\*\* = no response



## APPENDIX G -- continued

SCALE USED: 1 - not at all      3 - more or less      5 - much  
 2 - some                      4 - a fair amount      6 - very much

## 5. I can make a decision.

Participant	a	b	c	d
	Before	End of	End of	4 Mo.
	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	Later
A	2	5	3	6
B	3	4	5	4
C	1	**	2	2
D	4	5	3	4
E	3	5	5	3
F	3	5	5	5
G	2	6	4	4
H	3	5	5	6
I	4	5	4	5
J	4	6	3	5
K	4	5	5	5
L	2	5	4	6
M	2	4	4	5
N	4	**	4	5
O	**	**	4	4
P	2	5	4	6
Q	2	3	**	**
R	2	4	3	1
S	2	4	3	4
T	3	6	6	4
Average	2.74	4.82	4.0	4.42
	N=19	N=17	N=19	N=19

## 6. I can talk about myself in a positive way.

Participant	a	b	c	d
	Before	End of	End of	4 Mo.
	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	Later
A	3	5	3	5
B	4	5	5	4
C	1	**	5	5
D	5	6	5	6
E	2	4	4	3
F	4	5	5	5
G	1	5	4	4
H	1	6	6	6
I	4	5	5	5
J	5	5	5	5
K	2	5	3	5
L	1	6	4	6
M	3	6	5	5
N	5	**	4	5
O	**	**	4	6
P	2	5	4	5
Q	2	4	1	1
R	1	3	3	3
S	1	2	2	3
T	2	5	6	4
Average	2.58	4.82	4.15	4.53
	N=19	N=17	N=20	N=19

## 7. I can ask directly for help or information.

Participant	a	b	c	d
	Before	End of	End of	4 Mo.
	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	Later
A	5	6	4	6
B	4	5	5	5
C	1	**	6	6
D	1	4	3	4
E	4	5	4	4
F	3	5	5	5
G	1	5	4	5
H	4	6	6	6
I	3	5	5	5
J	5	5	4	6
K	4	5	4	5
L	1	6	5	6
M	2	5	5	5
N	5	**	5	5
O	**	**	4	5
P	3	5	4	5
Q	2	5	**	**
R	1	2	2	2
S	2	5	3	4
T	3	5	6	5
Average	2.84	4.94	4.42	4.95
	N=19	N=17	N=19	N=19

## 8. I have a greater sense of worth in my role as homemaker.

Participant	a	b	c	d
	Before	End of	End of	4 Mo.
	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	Later
A	3	5	3	5
B	4	3	5	5
C	6	**	1	1
D	2	5	5	4
E	3	6	5	5
F	3	3	3	3
G	1	1	1	1
H	5	6	5	5
I	3	5	3	4
J	4	5	4	5
K	5	5	4	4
L	2	5	4	6
M	4	6	5	5
N	5	**	5	5
O	**	**	6	6
P	2	5	2	4
Q	3	3	**	**
R	4	5	3	3
S	2	2	3	4
T	5	6	6	5
Average	3.84	4.47	3.84	4.21
	N=19	N=17	N=19	N=19

a, b = responses in column a and b were given on November 21, 1985.

c, d = responses in column c and d were given on March 21, 1986.

\*\* = no response

## APPENDIX H

Answers obtained at the end of the program<sup>a</sup> and four months later<sup>b</sup> to the question: "Have you received sufficient information on the following topics?"

Scale Used = 1 - insufficient  
2 - a little

3 - good quantity  
4 - all the necessary  
information

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	<u>insufficient</u>		<u>a little</u>		<u>good quantity</u>		<u>all the necessary information</u>	
	<u>a</u>	<u>b</u>	<u>a</u>	<u>b</u>	<u>a</u>	<u>b</u>	<u>a</u>	<u>b</u>
1. resources available to an employment centre	1	1	2	5	5	6	12	8
2. employer's expectations	1	1	0	1	8	11	11	7
3. job search methods	0	1	1	0	9	10	10	8
4. the job interview	0	1	1	2	9	8	10	8
5. completing your studies	0	1	2	0	5	8	12	10
6. starting a small business	1	1	1	2	9	9	8	6
7. the transition process	0	1	1	2	9	8	9	9

\* Frequency varies since some participants did not respond to all items.

## APPENDIX I

The obstacles identified in November, 1985 and in March, 1986.

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<u>Obstacles</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	
	<u>November '85</u>	<u>March '86</u>
	(N=20)	
no obstacles	3	2
lack of determination	4	7
lack of support from husband	9	6
lack of support from children	6	3
lack of support from others living under the same roof	1	2
lack of educational training	10	8
lack of personal financial resources	6	4
lack of resources in my area	2	4
isolation	6	3
geographical distance	6	5
health problems	7	5
the fear of changing	11	8
I lack confidence	-	3
I can't drive a car	-	1