

of engagement of service populations for a variety of purposes.

Frequently, we offer pre-packaged services to participants because that seems easier than to struggle through the process of engagement. Clearly, working that process through with people produces contractual agreements for service that are more specific and workable. The engagement process is especially important in the context of our setting because it helps to avoid "clientizing" the people with whom we work; and avoids the development of an aura of mysticism about the functioning of professionals. Further, if the engagement process is properly carried out, then it is more likely that the resulting service will be closer to the needs of participants.

Once again, I wish to emphasize that the factor which determines the professionalism of a piece of work is the extent to which (given the attention to some of the other tasks of the social worker listed above) the worker pays skillful attention to both the content *and* the process of the work. These two themes are ever-present, and any attempt to opt for one or the other in order to remove the dynamic tension they present together is a gross oversimplification of the complexities of social work process.

Similarly, an attempt on the part of a

Center to provide only those services to groups which seem to fit historical statements of JCC function is a distorted and narrow view of the needs of our participants, the potentialities of a Jewish community center, and the capacity of social workers in our setting to be of real service to Jews.

Conclusion

The paper has dealt only with the arena of social work function and tasks. I have not dealt with the complexities of the issue of how we engage committees and boards in order to solicit support for what are the most expensive services which a Center can provide. We must confront the issue of cost of social work services, and the fact that they will always produce the least amount of income of any service area. However, if we take pride in ourselves, if we are convinced of the need for our services, and if we are convinced that this is a critical function of our institution; then we shall find ourselves courageous enough to engage in the struggle required to convince those to whom we are ultimately accountable.

If we do not take on this responsibility for the conservation and strengthening of the soul, for after all is said and done that is the primary assignment of our profession, then no one else shall do it for us.

Achieving Jewish Substance: Developing Bridges Between Jewish Objectives and Practice*

DAVID DUBIN

Executive Director, Jewish Community Center of Atlanta, Georgia

THE dominant issue within the Jewish communal field in recent years has been the concern for enriching the quality of Jewish life. It has been the focus of national conferences, the subject of professional articles, and the target of a specifically designed task group within the Association of Jewish Center workers. In reviewing the content of material under this new heading, it appears that our profession is once again struggling for clarity as to its Jewish purposes and potential. This time, however, we have broadened the designation of the issue but concomitantly have conveyed a new kind of specificity in defining problems related to Jewish quality. For example, under the broad heading of "enriching the quality of Jewish life," the literature, conference discussions, Committee Statement of Principles, all seem to focus on "activities," including services to Jewish elderly, serving Jews in new towns, reaching the neglected constituencies and economically deprived Jews, curbing the unsavory practices of Jewish functionaries, etc. Once again, however, there is the conspicuous omission of considerations related to the fundamental issues of commitment and ideology. These are concerns with which we must come to grips, unavoidably, and persistently, as a requisite to releasing recommendations for activities. While the issue of ideology is a complex one, it is nevertheless imperative to attempt to develop new insights into this problem which often tends to neutralize our search for Jewish substance.

This article will identify four specific problem areas in the tenacious effort of our profession to achieve Jewish substance.

Jewish Objectives and Professional Ideology

Social work is one of the most democratic of all professions. Philosophically, it is rooted in the respect for differences and technologically it is founded on the principle of self-determination. Jewish social work, or more specifically, group work in a Jewish community center subscribes to the ideology and technology of professional social work practice which remains the principle modality for the delivery of services. It is alleged that it would then follow that our commitment to specific Jewish purposes and beliefs might collide with the conformity of practice to professional principles. Our profession dictates that: a. we must help people make their own decisions. b. we do not moralize or pontificate. c. we remain impartial. In view of our commitment to these basic principles, the legitimacy of our specific Jewish objectives might appear contradictory. How does one reconcile the promulgation of specific Jewish beliefs (Israel, Jewish identity, enriching Jewish life, etc.) with the professional commitment to self-determination? For example, it would still appear, "wrong" to some Jewish community center professionals to take a specific stand on the question of inter-marriage.

Other sensitive issues related to Jewish life are often dealt with in study groups and conferences but are not confronted head on through practice and action. As a result, our impact is

* Presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service, Grossingers, June 8, 1975.

constricted as we become neutralized by our commitment to a confused concept of "acceptance of all people" including a misunderstanding of a respect for their differences. Jerry Hochbaum speaks of a neutral society, a blank page between the Old and New Testaments. In discussing the response of the Jewish community to intermarriage, he refers to its docile acquiescence, tolerance and general acceptance, and proceeds to outline a number of explicit actions to be taken by the Jewish community in opposition to intermarriage. He suggests we encourage local Rabbinical Boards to dissuade their members from performing at intermarriages without conversion of the non-Jewish spouse, dissuade the local Anglo-Jewish newspaper from carrying announcements of Jewish-Christian marriages and even exclude intermarried persons who have not converted from leadership roles in Jewish communal bodies.¹

It is clear that convictions about intermarriage and other sensitive Jewish issues can be expressed and actionalized without sacrificing professional skill and practice. Affirmative action on Jewish matters, uninhibitedly expressed and implemented would create the kind of advocacy that is in keeping with the highest standards of social work intervention to achieve sectarian objectives. A more flexible understanding and application of social work precepts would liberate us to achieve a more substantive Jewish impact.

Divergence of Attitudes

At a recent inter-disciplinary conference discussion on the role of the Jewish communal worker in strengthening Jewish life, one partici-

¹ Jerry Hochbaum, "Toward the Development of a Planned Communal Response to Jewish Intermarriage", *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Vol. LI, No. 2 (1974) pp. 133-134.

pant commented in frustration, "How can we develop a conceptual frame for 'quality' when each professional represents a different frame of reference himself and a different Jewish background — our respect for difference is killing us".

In discussing the development of a consistent Jewish Center ideology, Graenum Berger comments:

What makes such a development additionally difficult is the attitude of our lay leadership. Active, generous and thoughtful, as so many of them are, most were recruited not to serve an institution devoted primarily to advance Jewish purposes. Even for those who have a Jewish background, the fetish of diversity, the unwillingness to crystallize a discreet Jewish position, the belief that we can survive as Jews on the brink of marginality, the conviction that nothing can or should be fixed, for change is both inevitable and good, all militate against finding agreement in a field on a policy level — even though it may be attained in a single agency here and there—I don't think there can or will be a monolithic Jewish Center philosophy until most of our Centers subscribe to the fundamental principle that they exist today to teach Jews how to live fully as Jews in America.²

One further expression reflecting the problem of divergence is worth noting. In his introduction to background material for the 75th Anniversary Conference of the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service, Dr. Solomon Green writes:

In these abstracts, one finds information which can come to life when all are certain of our "why"? Yet, all of this makes clear that whatever Jewish commitment we seek

² Graenum Berger, "Emerging Patterns — Is There a New Look to the Jewish Community Center Movement in New York?", *Graenum Berger Speaks on the Jewish Community Center, A Fourth Force in American Jewish Life*, Jewish Education Press, 1966.

³ Solomon Green, "Introduction", *Toward Enriching the Quality of Jewish Life: Background Material for Discussion*, May 1973.

to enhance, we must allow for difference. This respect for difference, however, creates a caution in passing judgement — when there is a need for making decisions, or for taking a stand. This goes right to the heart of the question. How shall we discern the quality of Jewish life if it remains "all things to all men"? What does "enhancement" mean?³

It is clear that the Jewish community center movement is committed to fostering Jewish consciousness and Jewish life. In purpose, structure and methodology, it embodies the concept of *Klal Yisroel*, (the collectivity of Israel) and is dedicated to strengthening the Jewish family and enhancing Jewish cultural life. There is little if any contrariety among professional and lay leaders regarding these broad sentiments. They allow for the kind of flexibility needed in agencies to interpret and execute their purpose. They also represent objectives which are unquestioned and free of any potential controversy. However, they evoke the following questions. Do these objectives allow the Jewish community center to subscribe to any specific beliefs with derivative patterns of behavior that are explicit and reflective of these beliefs? Does "Jewish identification", "enhancement", "consciousness" and "solidarity" offer youth the kind of explicitness, purposefulness and authenticity that they are seeking, or "do they go elsewhere?" Do these broad and generalized sentiments, devoid of any ideology fill young people with the spirit of Judaism? Are they actionable and translatable to concrete forms of Jewish expression?

Our profession is proud of its democratic character and boasts of its respect for differences. It understands that a monolithic ideology is, in fact, unrealistic, because the moment we formulate a universal position, variations follow.

However, a variety of reinforcements would accrue to the Jewish community

center in its search for Jewish substance were it supported by a distinct ideological underpinning. There would be more consistency and clarity as to our Jewish purposes. Staff workers would not have to readjust their "Jewish input" as they move from agency to agency. There would be a clearer contract as to agency goals in the employment of professional staff. There would be a deeper sense of mission among staff guided by ideological directives. There would be a shared sense of purpose and direction among staff. Above all, the drive and motivation to produce substantive Jewish content would be greater.

Returning to reality, however, for even within this phantasy, problems of variation and individuality would inevitably emerge, some logical questions are suggested. Can the Jewish community center capture the spirit of commitment that emanates from a unitary ideological foundation, when in fact, it has no such foundation? How can a Jewish community center reconcile its search for Jewish quality with the disarming effect of its diversity? How can Jewish substance be achieved within the reality limitations of neutrality and disparity? On the other hand, one might pose the following questions: Is it necessary to have ideological uniformity to achieve a meaningful impact? Are there not areas of commonality that can be channelled into individualized programs of quality and creativity? This latter question is obviously rhetorical as outstanding programs of Jewish substance have surfaced in many Jewish Centers, programs that are indeed reflective of Jewish motivation and determination. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize those inherent factors within the Jewish community center movement related to ideological neutrality and attitudinal divergence that can and do

impose limits on the pervasiveness and depth of our Jewish purposes and programs. If there is no acknowledgement of this real problem, then there will be no counteractional effort to deal with it, and we cannot escape this responsibility with appealing clichés and familiar catchwords.

The Issue of Religion

The relationship of the Center to religion theologically and socially remains a most delicate and sensitive issue. Religion is rarely discussed in depth in its relevance to the Jewish community center. The reasons are obvious: a. The Jewish community center is not a religious institution; it is an institution to strengthen Jewish identification through programs of Jewish culture, education and personal enlightenment; b. the Center is without a religious ideology; c. the missionary character of religiosity is incompatible with the communal character of the Center and its principles of professional practice.

It is interesting to note that in the "Statement of Principles",⁴ released by the Committee on the Quality of Jewish Life of the Association of Jewish Center Workers, the only sentence that even approximates a comment on religion is: "Personal affiliation with synagogues and other Jewish organizations should be encouraged". In fact, in an impressive numerical listing of Jewish goals and directives, this one innocuous comment is without a separate heading. Its insignificance is conspicuous and reflective of the broader disassociative pattern that characterizes our Centers' relation to religion.

However, regardless of our efforts to avoid it, the issue of religion comes

back to haunt us. In the appendix of an analysis of the studies of Dr. Bernard Lazerwitz and Marshall Sklare, the findings conclude:

According to the Lazerwitz and Sklare studies, observance of religious practices and active participation in Jewish organizations are highly correlated with activity in other areas of Jewish life, such as support of Israel and providing Jewish education for children. Lazerwitz found that the factors contributing most heavily to high Jewish identification were religious behavior, pietistic behavior, Jewish organization activity, Jewish education and Zionism. Similarly, Sklare found that religio-sacramental indices, including synagogue attendance and synagogue organizational participation are most strongly correlated with other Jewish behavior, such as support for Israel, participating in Jewish clubs, providing education for children, having Jewish friends.

The findings have significance to Centers. If, as the study indicates, that among religiously observant Jews, there is a high degree of Jewish identification and a strong sense of responsibility towards other Jews and support of activities which unify the Jewish community, the Centers may want to consider the introduction of or expansion of programs of a religious and Jewish educational cultural nature . . . Centers should help people to experience religious observances, to search out their implications, elaborate on them, find their own meanings in them and to see the continuity between the Torah and the human being's relation to man and G-d as prescribed in behaviours oriented to fulfill man's relationship to his fellow man and consequently to G-d.

It is suggested that Centers consider creative ways of including religio-pietistic practices into their programs and services and/or to help families reinforce Jewish identification. In the light of changes in contemporary style, Centers sooner than synagogues, might be able to adapt to change and provide innovative programs.⁵

⁵ Morris Levin, *An Analysis of Selected Research on Jewish Identification and Implications for Jewish Communal Service*. A Project of Florence L. Heller—National Jewish Welfare Board Research Center.

If, indeed, there is a strong correlation between religio-pietistic practices and a high degree of Jewish identification, it would follow that religious oriented activities are not only desirable but necessary if Jewish community centers are to have an impact on the quality of Jewish life. It also appears that the authors of the foregoing excerpt were suggesting that the Centers need not subscribe to a specific denominational philosophy as a requisite to expanding upon religious practices in the Center's program. One might ask, however, how a religious activity can be genuinely motivated when it does not have the support of a religious commitment. Stated in broader terms, the issue is whether the Jewish community center can be comfortable in advocating and implementing religious activity when it is devoid of a specific religious foundation. Might there not be conflicts with regard to the Center's unique character of neutrality? It is suggested that these questions are partially responsible for the equivocation that presently characterizes the range and depth of Jewish content in Center programs. The fear of becoming "too Jewish" or "too religious" is still an inhibiting factor as one evaluates the energies applied to meeting Jewish objectives. The rationalization that professional staff cannot comfortably motivate and innovate Jewish religious activities unless they are religious or observant themselves must be disputed.

More often than not, the problem around introducing activities of a religious nature is more a symptom of agency equivocation than individual resistance. Through education and supervision, the professional staff can be helped to understand that religious oriented activity is not inimical to agency purposes, but clearly consistent with its Jewish objectives. It is worth

noting that professional staff have little problem implementing the Kashruth policy of Centers, when in fact, few staff members observe Kashruth themselves. Further, a distinction must be made between exposure to religious activities and the propagation of a specific ideology. Center members of all ages can be helped in a creative Sabbath service, experience *Kiddush* and *Havdolah*, study the weekly *Sedra*, learn how to read and understand the *Siddur*, etc., without being pressured to become religious. We need to develop experiences which are emotionally satisfying and Jewishly authentic and worry less about whether they appear to be "too religious".

If there is evidence of a correlation between religious practices and high Jewish identification among adults, there is even a greater indication of a correlation between youth and the need for behavior that is explicitly Jewish.

When asked about the place of mysticism in Judaism, the Rabbinical and Jewish educational communities either dismissed the possibility or feigned knowledge. A result of this situation was that many Jewish youth seeking mysticism looked outside of Judaism because they had no reason to believe there to be any mysticism within Judaism. (An Indian journalist writing in the New York Times on the "Guru" business, for example, expressed his astonishment at the large number of young Jews who had come to India to live at Ashrams and to follow Indian Gurus.)⁶

While Jewish leaders were advised not to panic or overreact to the Jews for Jesus movement, there were serious backroom discussions and strategies aimed at attacking the infusion of young Jews into the movement. Equal concern has been expressed about the disproportionate infiltration of Jewish youth into the Haare Krishna culture.

⁶ Byron Sherwin, "Why They Come to Study Jewish Mysticism", *Sh'ma*, May 1974.

⁴ *Statement of Principles*, Committee on Quality of Jewish Life, Association of Jewish Center Workers, 1973.

It is less important to focus on the implication of these defections for Jewish survival than to understand specifically what attracts young Jewish adults to these "passion groups". What ingredients are missing from their Jewish development that causes them to look elsewhere and are these factors retrievable? Specific concepts come to mind when thinking of these groups. They include: emotionalism, explicitness, extremism, belief, dedication, behavioral imperatives, purity, decisiveness, consistency, etc. Are these not seductive values for young Jewish minds searching for meaning and purpose in their lives? Jewish youth are no longer satisfied with vague sentiments of ethical behavior, surface Judaism, and token expression as a way of life and when they do not get what they need, they turn elsewhere. What they need is not only to believe in something but the opportunity to demonstrate that belief confidently and explicitly by their behavior. They deplore inconsistency compromise, superficiality, and equivocation, and they often act out radically when they are left empty, deprived of a faith and a philosophy to demonstrate who they are and why they are. They do not want to play at being Jews: they want to work at becoming Jews and getting beyond the wrapping to the reality.

Two young Lubavitcher Chasidim, bearded with black hats unexpectedly walked into a JCC-AZA teen group meeting one evening and talked with the teenagers for over an hour. The leader later reported that subsequent to the meeting with the Chasidim, the group decided to spend the last fifteen minutes of each group meeting on "Torah Concepts". According to the leader, "they were enthralled with the young Chasidim". The fact is that young Jewish adults are turned on to authenticity, explicitness and unin-

hibited commitment. It would be wise for the Jewish community center to retrieve those seductive qualities that lure young Jews into misguided movements and implant them into the tone and corpus of its Jewish programs. This can only be achieved, however, when there are no obstacles, resistances, or rationalizations as to the inclusion of religious practices into Jewish Center programs, because it is here that opportunities for personal arousal and emotion are most evident. For example, there would be greater opportunity to "turn young people on" through the inspiration of a Chavurah Study Group than at a Purim Carnival or even Israel Parade.

It should also be noted that explicitness and affective Judaism are not only concerns for reaching youth, but have equal significance for adults as well. It is not accidental that the Reform Jewish movement has begun to recognize the value of tradition in its program. It has begun to recognize that belief cannot be separated from behavior and that young Reform Jews in California are saying something when they begin to wear *Yarmulkas*. Leonard Fein has pointed to the "general uncertainty regarding the requirements even the desiderata of Judaism, an uncertainty that is quite evident among adults and still more striking—among youth". He also encourages Reform Temples to provide its members with richer opportunities in affective Judaism and notes that the Reform Temple is at present not helpful in meeting the three major needs of Reform Jews — the need for community, the need for an ideological foothold in Judaism, and the need for a more direct Judaic experience.⁷

In short, while there continues to be

⁷ Leonard J. Fein, *Reform is a Verb: Notes on Reform and Reforming Judaism*, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, New York, 1972.

some uncomfortableness with and detachment from religion as an ideology and in its applicability to the Jewish community center, it must now be recognized that religious practices can be functionally desirable in the Jewish community center program without altering the basic character of the Center itself. Further, it should be evident that when professional staff are free to make this application, overcoming personal resistances and accommodating agency objectives, then greater dividends will be realized of a qualitative Jewish impact on young Jews seeking to discover meaning, fulfillment and authenticity.

Quality of Jewish Staff

Much has been written about the quality of Jewish staff. In reality, it is not possible to talk or write about Jewish content without commenting on the issue of staff, for ultimately the range and quality of our Jewish services depend on who is hired to implement them. Jewish Center work is hardly an exact science as almost all Center services are a reflection of the individual and subjective input of professional staff workers. To put our Jewish priorities in proper context, there must first be a recognition of the primacy of the goal of Jewish identification.

Whether the index is a rising rate of intermarriage, or the obscenity of young Jews supporting the Al Fatah, or the fact that even with the record numbers exposed to some form of Jewish education, most Jews are essentially illiterate as Jews, whether the index is the decline in synagogue membership and attendance, or the pursuit by some young Jews of Zen Buddhism, drugs, or the other faddish cop-outs of the moment, whether the index is the acceptance by some adult Jews of check-book Judaism as an adequate form of Judaic expression, or our lack of alternate forms for meaningful expression, the conclusion is plain: for all our safety and for all our security, we are in trouble.

It turns out, after all, that the survival of Jews is not sufficient to insure the survival of Judaism; it develops that the American offer of refuge to Jews has not been sufficient to guarantee the continuing strength of Judaism.⁸

Clearly, it is the fundamental and inescapable task of the Jewish community center to provide for creative forms of Jewish expression if it is to contribute significantly to the cause of Jewish survival. Its Jewish objectives cannot be relegated to secondary status and it can no longer regard itself as a supplemental source in Jewish life. The Center has a profound commitment to be one of the primary sources of Jewish experiences for its members and the community.

Logically, if there is recognition of the primacy of its Jewish objectives, and it is time there should be, it would then follow that the primary criteria in selecting professional staff should be their Jewish qualifications. It is somewhat delusional to believe that marginal Jews can be engaged to work in Jewish community centers and that extensive in-service training will help ready them to translate Jewish purposes into Jewish services. Heretofore, the emphasis has been on "making Jews out of staff members." The focus now must be to begin with "Jews". In one major New England Jewish community center, a firm and resolute decision was made, involving board and staff, to search out candidates for staff positions who were uniquely Jewish, in knowledge, commitment and motivation, irrespective of professional training in social work. The Center also sought out students from schools of Jewish communal service for field work practice. A Program Director was hired, who, although lack-

⁸ Leonard Fein, "A Jewish Agenda for the 70's"; Presented to Annual Meeting of Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston, Sept. 13, 1970.

ing professional training, was distinguished in terms of Jewish knowledge and commitment. As a result of this conscious pre-emptory effort, the scope and depth of Jewish services within the Center has been immeasurably strengthened.

Many have argued that there is an insufficient supply of inspired young Jewish candidates to meet personnel vacancies. This concern, however, cannot go unchallenged until there is evidence of more strenuous efforts to tap other sectors of the Jewish community to discover and cultivate qualified Jewish individuals and to motivate them towards Center work. While there is evidence of some shifting among Center executives towards the Jewish criteria in engaging staff, there continues to be a noticeable lag between need and readiness. It is felt that a totally uninhibited effort to search out, recruit and cultivate superior Jewish talent will lead to the discovery that it is indeed "out there" and waiting to be channelled into vehicles for creative Jewish service.

The case for the preeminence of Jewish qualifications in selecting staff does not necessarily imply a depreciation of the mental health role of the Jewish community center. The primacy of Jewish objectives is not antithetical to concern for psycho-social development. One need only refer to the familiar Lewin formulation which contends that to the extent that one is more securely identified with the ingroup, the better and more fully one will be able to relate to the outgroup. To be sure, the securing of ethnic identity is not unrelated to the broader concern for personality development. The question is who is better able to achieve this objective, if choice between the two be necessary: the trained practitioner or the committed Jew. Here, it is necessary to refer to the many unresolved questions

related to the evaluation of the effectiveness of social work intervention. While the unique skill of social work is not being challenged, Centers are questioned as to the priority given Jewish objectives. The issue resolves itself to the position that an individual can be taught program skills, he cannot easily be taught how to feel Jewish.

Beyond the recognition of the priority for Jewish qualifications in staff selection, there is then the need to sharpen and refine those criteria that are relevant for determining desirable Jewish attitudes and proclivities for professional leadership. This is indeed a most complex task as it involves the subjective evaluation of what constitutes a "positive Jew". Nevertheless, it is crucial that some intelligent effort be made to delineate those attitudes and experiences that are conducive to Jewish professional leadership recognizing that desirable criteria might vary from agency to agency. This differentiation would not be surprising in view of the problems of attitudinal divergence discussed earlier. In the interview process, questions need to be carefully designed to elicit attitudes, feelings and experiences and then to be carefully designed to capacity for implementation. All too often candidates who are verbally impressive as Jews are ineffectual as Jewish practitioners. In a recent survey of Jewish young adults applying for part-time positions in a Jewish community center, a number of carefully worded questions were designed to uncover potential skills for Jewish leadership. They included: a. response to concern for Jewish survival b. knowledge of any distinct Jewish contributions to the world c. reaction to Jewish activist movement d. involvement in Jewish causes, i.e., Soviet Jewry, Israel, etc. e. attitudes towards policies of Israeli government, f. attitudes towards intermarriage g. differences be-

tween parents' and own sense of Jewishness, etc., etc.⁹ While the analysis of the survey provided no absolute yardstick for measuring Jewish quality, it did enable professional staff to separate out specific factors that signified high potential for a qualitative Jewish input. For example, some respondents, although seemingly positive as Jews in some areas, conveyed the feeling that Jewishness and ethnicity were anathema to their universalistic and humanistic philosophy. They saw ethnicity as insular and provincial with the resulting equation that to be Jewish is not to be for social change and social justice. This group of respondents were viewed as less desirable than those who were "action oriented Jews" involved meaningfully in Jewish causes and movements.

It is not suggested that every agency executive or Personnel Committee develop an instrument to interview job applicants and measure their Jewish potential. The critical concern is that there is a recognition of the primacy of "Jewish qualifications", as well as a more planful and purposeful approach

⁹ Summary Report on Jewish Identification Survey of Jewish Young Adults applying for part-time positions in a Jewish Community Center, Brookline, Brighton, Newton Jewish Community Center, 1971.

designed to uncover these qualifications.

Conclusions

This paper has attempted to identify four specific issues as they relate to the potential of the Jewish community center to contribute to the enrichment of the quality of Jewish life. The problems reflected in these issues are not presented to disparage either the commitment or the capacity of the Jewish community center to provide substantive Jewish services that can affect a significant impact on Jewish life. The major assumption underlying this paper is the conviction, that in many ways, the Jewish community center is uniquely positioned to effect a primary influence on Jewish identification, both cognitive and affective. To achieve its potential, however, some truths need to be acknowledged, truths which may be resisted) not necessarily to counter personal conflict, but because they are inherent and great truths. Still, the commitment and drive to maximize Jewish objectives remain intact. To fortify this commitment, whether as part of specific services or in general impact, it is critical to openly and honestly confront those deceptions or false issues which neutralize our own spirit and determination.