THE IMMIGRANT SITUATION AS FOCUS OF THE HELPING PROCESS

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Editor's Note: Although this article appeared in the pages of this Journal *nearly fifty years ago (March, 1950, vol. 26, no.3) and it focused on a very different immigrant population than is seen today, it is quite relevant to contemporary resettlement work. It is reprinted as an example of NYANA's rich heritage and contribution to the work of resettlement.*

The Jewish community has recognized over a long period both the individual and the social value of professional help to immigrants. One is the need of the immigrant as a person who experiences radical changes and who wants help with this experience. The other is the need of the community that will fare better or worse according to whether, where, and how the immigrant will become a part of the community. This has become strengthened by our sense of moral obligation to displaced persons. There is also our awareness that present-day immigration is not so much caused by specific plans to empty camps, etc., as it is caused by an unsettled world situation that has a long-range character and that keeps people moving. The facts of immigration as well as our concern with them have had continuity in the past, and they are bound to be of a long-range character.

This continuity of need and interest meets with the challenge of marked changes in professional specialization and in the community auspices of welfare organizations (as represented especially by the development of the public assistance program). These changes have created a state of flux both in matters of professional method and in matters of community organization. Casework with immigrants is affected by this state of flux. It needs to find and define its place in relation to a changed professional and community picture. This paper limits itself to the question of professional specialization. It must be recognized, of course, that the needs and potentialities of communities vary, and their use of professional specialization varies.

The present situation of the immigrant is the *immigrant* situation. It is not a situation of unemployment, need for housing, family relationships, etc., although all of these may be part of the immigrant situation. The *immigrant* situation means a complex of social phenomena to which the immigrant relates and in relation to which he experiences himself. It calls for the services of an agency that are related to these phenomena in a purposeful way. Generic methods in the helping process require us to use the present situation of the client as focus of the helping process, both in understanding the client and in relating the agency's service to him or her.

How do we use the immigrant situation as present situation? A great deal of professional effort has gone into developing and understanding the specifics of the immigrant situation and in helping us differentiate it from the specifics of basic social situations, requiring other professional functions. I want to outline our present understanding of these specifics and to demonstrate the validity of generic methods in the use of these specifics. This inseparability of specifics from generic method is a characteristic of the field of casework.

The immigrant situation has proved to be a powerful specific in casework with present-day immigrants. Generic elements of psychology, such as the psychology of various elements of culture, or the psychology of change and how the individual relates to such changes, are, of course, very meaningful. However, a very large element of the

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immigrant's social situation can be understood only in specific terms. This understanding does not come out of our general life experience, which otherwise is so helpful in understanding basic problems of family living, sickness, emotional disturbance, delinquency, etc. We therefore need to give an unusual degree of effort to trying to understand the specifics of this particular social situation.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE IMMIGRANT SITUATION

Some of the specific difficulties and characteristics of the immigrant situation are the following:

1. The immigrant situation is characterized by complexity. There are legal, social, personal aspects to this phenomenon. Each of them has a great many facets, and each has important psychological meanings. We have the constant problem of losing sight of the client because of the complexity of the technical elements that go with immigration; or we begin to reject the technical elements that go with immigration; or we begin to reject the technical elements because of their complexity and cannot relate to the reality of our client. Our client has the same problem of finding and maintaining a proportion between these various elements.

2. The immigrant situation is characterized by its vastness and its obscurity as a movement. Where is the beginning of this movement? Are we really meeting a beginning in the client who comes to us? There are different kinds of beginnings. One of our records begins with a letter. The client who wrote this letter was able to come to the agency only two years after he wrote that letter. He wrote it in Germany to a relative of his who does not live in this country.

> I, Israel, after great pain, have succeeded in getting liberated from Hitler's concentration camps, in which nearly everybody had been exterminated. And I am the only one who is left alive out of the whole Abram family, the rest, alas, have been the victims of the gas chambers. I could not relate in words how I got away from certain death. In my second letter I will be more specific. Today I only want Uncle to know that one at least of the family is alive, by some miracle, I believe. Today I am free to go wherever I please but—I do not know where to go. I am waiting for Uncle to send me a reply, inasmuch as I am all alone here, and I have no one with whom to talk matters over.

To me this letter has a quality of beginning similar to the beginning of the Bible. It is a voice, a will, which addresses itself to a chaos, which tries to create form out of this chaos. This letter may be a beginning to this client. However, we know that there were years of chaotic movement before this letter. The displaced person is a person for whom there is no place: a person pushed from place to place and searching from place to place. These are intensely meaningful experiences to our client, often long in time and accompanied by problems of decision and indecision. The client's engagement with such realities, his or her activities around them are prodigious. They are all part of the movement we call migration. When we meet our client in this country, in the use of agency help toward a beginning of stability, we know that after ending with the agency he or she will have yet a long way to go toward stability. To form the manifold ties that are the essence of human living, to establish oneself on a job, make friends, build a home, discover the strangeness and richness of a different culture, measure oneself with the new in misery and in pride, with the fear of retreat and with the courage of expansion, all this goes on a long time after the contract with the agency has ended.

3. The immigrant situation is characterized by a heightened degree of motion. Often it seems an experience with beginnings only. What continuity is there? The client begins with a country, with a community. He or she often wanders through a number of countries, a number of communities. What do we relate to? Are we part of a motion that has no beginning and no end, or are we part of a movement that we can define?

It may threaten to become motion without movement. Personal patterns adequately integrated in relation to the requirements of a certain social environment are apt to loosen up. Contrariwise, the experience of motion often creates a need to hold on to established patterns more rigidly than ever and to negate personal response and change that would be possible otherwise. We are inclined to evaluate signs of this motion as personality problems where there are none. Often we also take movement for granted where there is none, while the motion of migration coincides with or brings out disturbance of personality.

4. Another characteristic of this movement is the client's contact with numerous agencies and organizations. There are governmental organizations and institutions serving various purposes of national policy and of the law; there are private agencies to help the client relate to these purposes. A worker is often related simultaneously to a number of organizations, agencies, departments abroad and in this country, while relating also to the client. If we follow the line of agencies and organizations that beset the path of present-day immigration, we could find considerable differences as to the kind of purpose served and the room left to consider the client's purpose. There is no neat and clear line of demarcation that indicates where one way of relating ends and another way of relating begins.

Clients bring to us the powerful reality of an experience in which a purpose other than their own takes precedence and in which relationship is the means of directing, controlling, manipulating them according to that purpose. They bring this experience to us and also their way of dealing with such an experience; they bring their distrust in relationship and in intangibles; their need for isolating some part of themselves; their holding on to some unshared security and privacy; their expectation of being directed, controlled, manipulated, having to defend their right to be heard as an individual and sometimes to outwit the adversary, as it were; and protect the undiscovered contraband of personality and individuality.

In our corner of the professional world the basic value of the individual has not been completely undisputed—the immigrant is so tempting an object for direction and control! The phenomenon of control goes far beyond Nazism and DP camps, which we have a smug way of using to divest ourselves of responsibility. It may be the fear of something in ourselves, which we are trying to control and restrict when we meet with the phenomenon of migration. Migration brings us up against some basic personal conflicts for immigrant, lay community, and professional worker alike. Present-day culture reacts to this conflict by fearing too much migration and surrounding it with restrictions and controls. However, there are also the realities of mass, quantity, and pressure in this situation. The volume of immigration and the need for service depend on international developments, national policies, implementation of these policies, shipping facilities, and a large number of other factors. There are ups and downs in the volume of service needed. Quantitative pressures are a harrowing problem for the profession. How do we maintain professional standards and meet the need for service? Factors of mass, quantity, and pressure characterize the process of immigration all along. They carry over into this country. They have a way of fostering tendencies in the direction of control and manipulation.

5. Where is our part in this vast movement of the client? We relate to a very limited part of this complex movement when the client comes to us for help with local casework services. The client meets the agency in that part of his or her movement that is far removed from the beginning and also far from the ending with this process. This comes out in feelings of not knowing just what his or her place is going to be in the new society or where he or she is going. This middle is dangerous and threatening. The client brings to it the experience with and the expectation of control. He or she brings to it much motion and instability and little to hold on to. The need to hold on to something often becomes very strong: to hold on to a fantasy, to hold on

to some part of a present reality and to permit no further movement. The client brings to the agency the reality of an undefined relationship to the new environment. This is true in relation to the worker, in relation to relatives he or she has not known before, in relation to the Jewish group, and in relation to society as a whole. These problems of undefined relationship are an important specific in work with immigrants.

6. Although the client's contact with the local casework agency is limited, it is necessary to have the whole of this "migration movement" pulled together in this limited part. Again and again the client brings to us, unasked and unprovoked, the realities and feelings about where all this movement began and what it is like. Where do I come from? How have I been going? Where am I going? The sense of loss, the vastness of loss transcending the personal, and reliving itself in the common tragedy of those killed, mutilated, and dispersed is carried into this limited part, and into it goes the feeling about what is going to be, the quest for the new, the reaching out to meet conditions for self-fulfillment and self-acceptance. The conscious use of this type of need, and our relating this experience of our client to what we understand of human movement, is important in our ability to be professionally helpful. Our experience also seems to indicate that we can be helpful only if we accept and hold on to our limited place within the client's movement. If we spread ourselves out with such clients trying to be with them and follow them over years, we give up our role that is essential in helping them find their direction in this vast extended movement.

7. This need for pulling together past and future in the present presents itself in very tangible terms. The technicalities of the immigration law sometimes separate families. Separations and unresolved ties are common occurrences in migration as we meet it. The part that is here and the part that is not here represent different stages of the immigration process that they, however, need to integrate as a reality of their present situation, and they need our help with it. There is the wife who expected her husband momentarily to arrive from abroad, her intense participation in the ups and downs of his immigration situation, her panic when he informed her that he would not receive local relief for some reason and was in danger of starving. The powerful reality of family relations, the no less meaningful reality of other ties and associations are given their specific color and configuration by the realities of the immigration process and have a prominent part in the client's attempt to integrate them into something with which he or she can deal.

We have by no means ended our learning about this social phenomenon. However, we must learn about it not merely for its own sake. Our tendency often becomes to see the person as an immigrant rather than the immigrant as a person. The immigrant situation is a potent, powerful part of our client's reality. We need to use it in a way that permits the client to come into a relationship with all his or her difference as an individual. We have erred often in exaggerating the immigrant situation as being the whole of the client. We have also seen the error going the other way; that is, as relating to the client as if he or she brought to us a situation of unemployment, sickness, a housing situation, a problem of a marital relationship, a number of scattered conditions, as it were, handled in a separate way and not tied together by the overall locus of an immigrant situation that gives these scattered details of unemployment, sickness, etc., a specific weight and relates them to the client's purpose in using our help. We have learned to use the immigrant situation as the *focus* of a helping process and not as a need and reality that is separate from other specific needs and realities.

A CASE EXAMPLE

Let us take a case example now to illustrate how we have learned to use this focus for evaluation and also as a tool in the helping process. Mr. and Mrs. A,[1] a middle-aged couple, apply to the agency for help shortly after arriving from Europe. The worker interprets his function as an extended-intake worker. They request help with housing, job,

and maintenance until they begin work. They have vocational skills that they present as something that will put them on their feet in a matter of days. However, there are medical needs, and there are problems in relation to relatives and affiants. Their principal relatives here are poor, ill people, living in crowded quarters. They sleep there on the floor. There is nervousness and friction. They did not expect this, and it is a great disappointment to them. The affiants are strangers who have made clear that they cannot help.

Mr. and Mrs. A had a good, substantial background in Europe. They could have come here years ago but decided against it. They fled to France and lived in a garret during the war years "without sun or air and like birds." After liberation things had been hard for them, too. They decided to come here because they had lost all their property and relatives there. Mr. A turns angrily against Mrs. A, accusing her that it had been her idea to come here. He had a job there. He would like to go back. It was hard to make a third start in life at his age where he didn't know the language and how to travel. His wife had also insisted on their coming to the agency.

Worst of all, they have a problem with themselves. They seem different from what they are and want to be. But who are they anyway? What will help them define this? There is ambivalence about the need for help. They angrily let the worker know that they are not charity seekers; they are independent, substantial people. They have not come for help; they have come for a loan.

The immigrant situation means a totality of needs and problems that are frightening to these clients. There is no stability in whatever direction they look. The worker's response to this frightening situation may increase their panic, or his response may mean their taking a different direction: "I accepted them as independent people and realized how hard it was for them to come to the agency and make a beginning in America, but I wondered whether Mr. A really had given himself a fair chance up to now. Mr. A didn't think he had and wanted to know about our help." The worker tells of our services, with money, vocational help, housing, etc., all of which are geared to the requirements of the immigrant-situation. They are willing to take responsibility for using our housing and vocational services. They struggle, however, against our needing to see their relatives. The worker is able to accept their feelings and to make room for their reality. They too are able to make room for the agency's reality. They will discuss with their relatives our need to see them, and we are willing to discuss with the relatives their own situation and the possibility of help from the affiants who are friends of these relatives.

In this interview, what is the worker doing from the standpoint of evaluation with the totality of needs and problems brought to him? How do various specific needs and purposes measure up against what is realistically part of an immigrant situation? What is situational, what is a matter of personality, how do family relationships come in, etc.?

Do we have indications of personality difficulties in Mr. or Mrs. A? We do not know at present. The strain of living under abnormal conditions for a long period of time, the strain of repeatedly making a start in life may accentuate weak spots in personality. Such weak spots come out at different times, often not in the beginning. However, if the worker were to introduce such general diagnostic understanding here, this no doubt would increase the client's panic.

What about the problem of marital relations that seems to come up? Mr. A's freedom to turn his anger against Mrs. A and then to get together with her and the worker indicates a strong relationship. The requirements of our culture are harder on the bread-earner than on the homemaker. The requirements of the immigrant situation accentuate this discrepancy considerably, at least in the beginning. It is sound and healthy for the family as a whole to permit Mr. A to balance the scales this way and increase his strength to serve his family. Stable and unstable family relation-

[1]This case was carried in the Family Service Dept. of the United Service for New Americans, the forerunner organization to NYANA.

ships make a considerable difference in the strength immigrants have to meet the requirements of the immigrant situation.

The relationship between Mr. and Mrs. A is now permeated with the challenge of the immigrant situation. The help they use as immigrants will necessarily involve their relationship as husband and wife.

Out of such a totality of needs and problems, some more and some less real, the worker selects and focuses on two meaningful realities. He accepts and handles their ambivalence about the need for help, and he introduces the services of the agency. The worker can understand their panic about their totality of needs and problems. Were there nothing behind the worker, he might respond to his clients' panic with his own panic and, thus, increase the downward pull enormously. It is important for the clients that the worker need not have this panic. This worker does not have it. His agency has accepted this totality of needs as part of a specific situation and has provided services as an expression of this acceptance. Reality is not denied, but its psychological meaning changes. A totality of needs and problems, which hung for these clients in the vacuum, as it were, are defined by the agency as the normal part of a specific situation. The agency accepts confusion, disorganization, instability as a part of the immigrant situation, at least for a period of time.

Our readiness to accept the need for help and to establish personal responsibility in relation to the requirements of the present situation, rather than in terms of personality change, can serve to strengthen what is positive and strong in the client and to limit the spreading of the weak. A situation of disorganization and instability may support the unstable and unintegrated part of the personality. The client often experiences the earmarks of the situation as characteristic of his or her personality or of the worker's personality (to which there is usually a kernel of diagnostic truth): I am weak, I am defeated, I am powerless, etc., or you are cruel, you are denying, you want to destroy me. There is totality in those projections and displacements. Wherever and whatever the source of weakness, the agency permits the worker to limit it to the immigrant situation and to limit the client's responsibility to some handling of this situation. "You have not given yourself a fair chance so far," the worker can say to Mr. A with the assurance of his agency purpose and of his understanding of immigrant situation. Using help, instead of constituting a choice between adequacy or inadequacy of a personality, becomes a matter of giving it a fair chance in agency terms. This limitation of responsibility and the simplicity with which the worker can convey it are truly helpful.

The worker handles the clients' ambivalence. He accepts their challenge that is in the question about the agency permitting them to be independent persons of substance. He introduces responsibility for using help. The clients fight the worker, and the worker meets this test: their fighting can become part of the professional relationship. The clients experience that they are accepted with respect. They also experience that movement can be mutual. Their freedom of saying yes and no to our help is accepted.

They do both. The relative calls the worker for an appointment and handles responsibly his own part and that of the affiants. The clients, however, do not keep their appointment nor do they respond to two follow up letters. Two months later they return. They had tried to get along without the agency's help, moving from their relatives, borrowing money from friends, and looking for work intensely—and now feel very miserable. The worker relates, "Mrs. A was quite angry at me for all that had happened. I gave that back to them.... They explained they never knew about my letters.... I pointed up their responsibility to follow up with me.... They could see there was something in this." The worker does not give pity and commiseration; he is able to continue to give them the respect of equals, whatever their present misery. Their problems have increased in the meantime because of debts they incurred and the agency's inability to help with debts. There is a realistic discussion about how they could handle these debts.

They have gained valuable experience in searching for jobs. They know now that they cannot use their vocational skills in this environment the same way as abroad. They also had to hear from a boss that he does not like to hire refugees. Mrs. A's need for medical care has increased. "The way of a refugee is hard. I agreed that it was hard, and I recognized what they had been trying to do but I thought that they were making a difficult situation even more difficult by the way they were doing things....Mr. A explained that there had been reasons and I realized that. I pointed out too that actually two months was a very short time to make a beginning, and it was a very little time in a lifetime and I wondered why they pressed themselves so hard. They both began to cry."

In this situation the worker asks himself: What is my responsibility? What can I take responsibility for? What do I want to take responsibility for? What is the client's responsibility? One thing stands out again and again in this contact: the worker's sure understanding of the immigrant situation and of the agency's purpose in relation to it cannot be separated from his skill in using professional method. The immigrant situation as a tool of the helping process needs to be used as a focus that permits the clients to bring in the realities and needs of their personality, of the family relationships, of cultural factors, and so forth. It is not a reality made by the immigrant agency for the use of the immigrant.

TRENDS IN CASEWORK SERVICES

The immigrant situation is a constellation of social phenomena that the immigrant experiences, and the services of an agency must be related to these phenomena in a purposeful way. The development of services related to specific social phenomena is characteristic of what we know of the helping process in other functional fields, too. Social agencies serve specific social needs, and they serve them for the sake of social values. In a casework agency one of these values is the understanding and the acceptance of personality that are provided for in professional standards of skill, through various administrative provisions of the agency, etc. An agency needs also to consider certain responsibilities and concerns that are characteristic of the social need and purpose the agency serves. The services of child placement, of a family agency, etc., relate to basic responsibilities and concerns, such as the need of a home for the child, the importance of various functions within the family, etc. Such characteristic responsibilities and concerns of the immigrant's situation need to be clarified, and services need to be related to them in terms of overall purposes and values.

There have been certain significant trends in the development of such services:

- the trend from undifferentiated to differentiated services
- the trend away from protecting the client from the problems of newness, and from the harshness that goes with it, toward helping the client relate to newness and deal with it in his or her own terms and for the purpose of social adjustment
- the trend toward defining our own responsibility in terms of community purpose and professional effectiveness in serving this purpose instead of having this responsibility defined from the outside, especially by the immigration law

These three trends are closely interrelated. In the beginning our setting up of service was dominated by the feeling of the harrowing experiences that made this immigrant group so different and special and by our impulsive need to spare them at least what seemed in our power to spare them; that is, all the harshness that goes with the newness of the immigrant experience. The reality of jeopardy that the immigration law introduces, under certain conditions, for immigrants who are in need of help, fed into our need of protecting our client from something. We took our cue from the immigration law rather than from a purpose of our own, which seemed to make the existence of protective provisions the beginning and end of the help the immigrant required. The situation of the immigrant seemed to us

like a social hazard that, at least for a certain period of time, warranted the provision of protective resources and supplies. We had a kind of conviction that the immigrant situation bore many earmarks of the situation of a child without parental home and support, the sense of helplessness made more disagreeable by the feelings an adult has about such a state of childhood. Our impulse was very strong to protect the immigrants from such newness and to spare them this painful, disagreeable experience inside and outside themselves.

We have learned better. We have learned that it is not possible for us to protect clients from the experience of newness and from the different meanings such experience carries. We have learned that we are not helpful by denying the reality of newness and their experience with it and establishing a niche, as it were, in which they can rest up from the labors that are theirs. We have learned that real help for the clients is not to protect them from newness but to help them learn how to use themselves in dealing with it. Time is of the essence in the beginning. It carries a quality of intense learning, of continuous absorbing and searching, of seeing oneself constantly challenged and questioned by manifold new situations. We need to relate our help to this intense learning process and its purpose. The frequency of our interviews needs to be geared to it, the content of our services, our requirements and conditions for using services, certainly our understanding of person, of situation, and of helping process. There has been a shift from our protecting clients from the rigors of newness to helping them take responsibility for it in agreement with certain values and goals. All our services, whether they make possible protection from social hazards under certain conditions, or whether they relate to various goals of self-establishment and self-maintenance in a new society are guided by this shift in emphasis.

The provisions of the immigration law have remained an important reality in the situation of immigrants. However, we have moved away from our exclusive preoccupation with the law as giving the direction for the services we need to establish, and toward a more positive and affirmative occupation with the basic responsibilities and concerns of the client in the immigrant situation. We have tied this up with the understanding of the purpose we serve in giving service to immigrants. We have recognized that helping the immigrant find a stable place in the new society is a purpose not only useful to the immigrant but eminently useful to the community.

BASIC CONCERNS OF THE IMMIGRANT

What are these basic responsibilities and concerns of the immigrant to which we try to relate our specific services?

Resettlement

The problem of settlement is a basic one. It arises from three sources:

1. It arises from the clients because they carry with them the feeling of not being settled in a community as long as they have not worked through the experience of some stability in relation to their environment. It does not matter whether the clients come to a specific local community as a destination or not. It is only their own experience that answers for them whether they are settled in this community and whether this community is best for them in this country. This is not an easy answer to find if we consider the heightened sense of motion that is characteristic of the immigrant situation.
2. It arises from facts that are unknown to the clients but which are of vital interest to them. There is, for instance, the fact of the limitation in the capacity of a local community to give help. There are other limitations and characteristics of local communities that will turn out to be of vital concern to clients and which they cannot be expected to know. These realities need to be shared with the clients, and they need help to consider them in mak-

ing their decisions about settlement.

3. There is the reality of a national concern about where immigrants settle and how they settle. This concern comes from overall interests of the national community (and needs to be presented to the client as such), and it comes also from understanding that the clients' temporary need and wish concerning settlement are often in disagreement with their long-range goals and those of the community.

Without going into specifics of a service that integrates these realities, I want to mention that such a service requires national planning and should be a basic factor in any national planning. Another problem that comes up in relation to settlement as a vital interest of the immigrant concerns the point at which the client can use such a service most profitably. Finally there needs to be some understanding about the period of time during which such a service remains available. This is closely related to the question of how long the community considers an immigrant an immigrant.

Movement toward Self-Sufficiency

Another basic element of the immigrant situation is the client's move toward self-establishment in a new society. The intensive learning of the beginning phase is spontaneous and powerful, although the client may often not be able to bring the facts and the problems of such learning to us. It is we who need to be related to this intensive process of the client as an eminently positive and promising factor. If we are not available to our client within this intensive process, we miss out on the client's most formative possibilities of using our help.

Self-establishment often involves bringing a family together, from the four corners of the earth sometimes, establishing a home, establishing one's self vocationally, socially, etc. Obviously, the movement toward self-establishment is modified by numerous factors of personality, family, etc. The need for services (vocational, housing, migration, medical, business and loan, maintenance, money for specific plans and purposes, use of community resources, homemaker, etc.) toward the purpose of such self-establishment became more and more emphasized as our experience grew.

Our difficulties have been in different directions. First is the difficulty of differentiating these enabling services from the equally important protective services. This found expression, for instance, in considering the immigrant function a "maintenance" function equated with the needs and responsibilities of a quite different client group. It also found expression in the opposite trend of considering the immigrants our property, so to say, at least for the five years the immigration law permitted us to lay our hands on them and to do all the planning possible for them. By now, I believe, those who have had experience in working with immigrants have been able to find their balance between these extremes. The setting up of enabling services and the increased role of the client in using these services have been major developments of our thinking that we are trying to translate into practice.

Another difficulty has been the differentiation of these enabling services from other basic services the community offers, such as family counseling, child placement, child guidance services, etc. Whatever the administrative auspices under which these services are given to the clients, it is important to help them separate what their needs and purposes are and for what purpose they want to use a service. Often there has been a tendency to change our service to adjust to what seemed to be the need of the clients instead of helping them find out about their need by holding on to the reality of our service and helping them use it for their need. In doing so, they may be able to decide whether this is what they want or whether they want the service of another agency.

We have problems in translating our expectations into terms of time. For instance, we know that the very beginning requires a certain basic orientation and the establishment of basic fundamentals, such as a roof

over one's head, concern with the whereabouts of one's family, finding out in a beginning way how to live on what is available, how much is allowed for what, etc. How much time can we allow for such basic orientation and planning? Furthermore, we know from experience that immigrants often in their general living experience, as well as in their planning for vocational adjustment, go through a period of speculation and experimentation that can be very helpful if understood rightly and used in a limited and responsible way. Again, how much time do we allow for such speculation and experimentation if we mean to allow it at all? It may go on as one of those circular movements that do not lead the client anywhere.

Finally, there is our experience with the very meaningful occupation of our client with the future. This concern with the future may be so strong that it all but absorbs the client's capacity to deal with the present. In the beginning of our experience we often erred in accepting the client's preoccupation with the future as constituting sufficient responsibility for meeting the requirements of the present situation. Later, under the pressure of various conditions, we tended to err in the other direction, establishing responsibility for the present with such strictness that we denied the place there was in the agency for a concern about and for planning for the future. This balancing out of responsibility for the present and for the future, and our relatedness to it, is one of the key questions in meeting the needs of the immigrant situation helpfully.

Protective Services

Protective services are related either to the needs of the immigrant situation or to the needs of the immigrant as a person in our society whom we accept on a basis of equality with certain basic rights and values as an individual, member of a family, etc.

Protection of the first kind arises where the immigrant deals with questions of immigrant status, change of this status, change either introduced by the government or sought for by the client. Questions of the law, of government structures and processes serving them are so complicated that our society has accepted the need for specialized help wherever the individual is faced with the law and the government, be this immigration law or otherwise. Such technical help has been available to immigrants for a long time.

However, the need for protective help arises also indirectly. Migration status can be affected by the overall planning of the immigrant and family. There are generic and specific responsibilities the law establishes for the immigrant. Some of them are clearly defined; many of them are not and are subject to interpretations that may change. Some of them are enforced; others are not. What immigrants do about their residence, their employment, their general conduct, how they use the community in situations of sickness, etc., all this may be evaluated by government at the point of naturalization, of corporate affidavit reports, or on other occasions, and some of their actions may have a vital bearing on the future. Certainly we cannot and we do not consider it helpful to take from the immigrant the risk inherent in his or her situation. However, we consider it our responsibility to furnish a base on which the immigrant can relate responsibly to such a risk. For this purpose it is not enough to have technical specialists. The professional use of these specialists is important.

Even more important is taking into our professional functioning the formidable concept of jeopardy. It is a realistic and a psychological concept. It requires our taking responsibility for knowledge, understanding, and action. It requires our using such knowledge and understanding in any specific service and in relation to any specific purpose for which we are giving it. A protective function, thus limited and defined, affects any and all the planning, all casework services the immigrant is using.

Protective services to the immigrant as a person with equal basic rights carry several meanings. In assuring equality to the immigrant as a person or in condemning the person to inequality as an immigrant, we have made a basic decision about our part in his or her finding a place in this society. The

immigration law is not established for the welfare of the immigrant in relation to the welfare of our society; it serves to protect our society from migration and to protect also certain special interests in our society. However, the law does not direct the community to take the same stand. Professionally, our answer needs to be a clear stand for equality of the immigrant as a person. Inequality of the immigrant is partly a matter of social reality, and to a great degree it is a matter of our choice, for which we are responsible. For the relationship between client and worker, agency and community, for the purpose of our helpfulness, it makes a great deal of difference whether in the services we offer the immigrant, and in the way we offer them, we show that we have chosen equality or inequality for the client to the degree that we can be responsible for it.

This discussion, relatively simple and clearcut in broad terms, becomes much more meaningful if related to certain specifics of our practice; for instance, to the responsibility the client is expected to take in using relatives, affiants, etc., as a resource. To illustrate the problems of practice in its more drastic aspects, I want to mention an immigrant family who were offered support by a relative under the conditions that this family gave up their child to this relative for adoption. This is drastic. Other examples of the price the immigrant needs to pay for the help he or she wants and needs from relatives, etc., are less clear. What is this price? Does it agree with the basic values we stand for? How does it agree with working toward self-maintenance and self-establishment as the main purpose we stand for? In our setting up services to meet responsibilities and purposes of the immigrant situation we come up against very difficult and meaningful decisions that are tied up with the question of equality or inequality for the immigrant.

Another basic meaning of protective services is to enable the immigrant to take *normal* responsibility for moving into the new society. Let us assume there were no provisions for situations of sickness, industrially caused unemployment, injury, death, the special needs of children for a homemaker and a home, the special needs of the aged, the special needs of handicapped people. How paralyzing the thought for well, strong, normally integrated persons to consider the possibility of these social hazards. To free them from this paralysis, to enable them to use the strength of their present resources in relation to the requirements of the present situation is a most constructive investment that our society makes in providing services to give protection from certain social hazards.

Protective services, geared to short-range needs, such as temporary illness, certain kinds of unemployment, etc., involve specific responsibilities for the client, such as use of his or her resources and meeting the requirements of such a situation constructively with the agency's help. Beyond this, it involves the responsibility for taking account of such recurrent setbacks, for making them part of one's expectations, psychologically as well as in tangible planning, within the realities and opportunities of the new society. Obviously such giving of protection from social hazards and such use of it have a meaningful bearing upon the client's moving toward and holding on to self-maintenance.

To conclude this discussion of the protective function we may note three essential features:

1. Protective services, be they in relation to the question of equality and inequality for the immigrant, or be they in relation to the freeing quality of a protective base, have an important bearing on our main purpose; namely, the client's moving toward self-establishment in the new society.
2. It is important to use this purpose of protection actively and consciously with the client as a focus in the helping process. Protective provisions as such are not helpful. Protective services need to be used in an integrated way with professional skill in relation to an overall purpose.
3. Protective services are differentiated according to long-range and short-range needs and purposes they serve. They

involve different specific responsibilities and different possibilities of professional use.

Specialized Services

Let us turn now to the specialized services that certain groups of clients require. Our experience has shown the following needs for specialization.

For the religious functionaries, reality possibilities, community purpose, psychological attitudes on basic values and goals, factors of group living and group identification have a distinct emphasis of their own in this group. Out of this has grown the experience of a cluster of services and of specialized experience that makes possible a more specific, more understanding, and more realistic use of professional help.

The group of young people, in adolescent age and up to the age of about 25 also requires specialized service. This applies especially to unattached young people and to those who have joined relatives here whom they have not known before. The usual problems of adolescent personality are markedly affected both by the experience of violence and outcast status, which has been the common lot of displaced persons, and by the experience of immigration. Normal tendencies in adolescent personality have become accentuated and exaggerated. The need for independence has been worked out prematurely and under tremendous pressures of abnormal conditions. Sources of dependence were cut off. The normal tendency to hide the need for dependence developed into putting a formidable protective shell around the still tender, undeveloped dependent self to protect it from a hostile world. This accentuation of normal tendencies makes for problems of regression and for various problems of personality integration. Independence is often accomplished with remarkable efficiency and effectiveness in relation to certain limited social areas, techniques and in terms of accomplishment, and personal security is found and used in such external sources rather than as a matter of personality integration with its stable basis of security inside the personality.

The young person often comes here without the experience of a relationship to a protective authority, without the experience that such authority is related to his or her right, as well as to his or her responsibility for growth. Services and requirements for services need to be geared to the specific limitations of a protective authority within the specific responsibilities for and requirements of growth. The main emphasis in giving such services is the understanding and use of relationship. Give-and-take is different in such relationships, and the movement of the client is different. Specialized experience in the use of professional skill is needed. The emphasis on adolescence with its specific needs and purposes cannot be separated from the emphasis on the immigrant experience, with its background of displaced-person upheaval, which has been and is for these youths an even more extraordinary reality than for other immigrants.

I want to refer to the situation of a 16-year-old boy who came here on an affidavit of an uncle and aunt who had two younger children of their own. Their home seemed in every respect normal and stable. The family wanted the boy. He seemed satisfied at first. He got a job at which he was very efficient. Then he began to complain about being hard of hearing, and he referred to having been hit on the ear in the concentration camp. Medical examination showed no organic basis for this deafness. He gave up his job and continued to complain about being deaf and feeling pains in his ear. Suddenly he left his home and moved into the home of an elderly unattached woman unknown to this family. The boy brought out much disappointment over the fact that his aunt had children of her own. In Europe he found himself suddenly deserted by his whole family one day. Whatever the reason for his being left alone, it was a shock to him. Later he learned that his family had been killed. Is it any wonder that living with a family was deeply disturbing to this boy?

The emotionally disturbed immigrant needs specialized service. Our experience has shown certain specifics in the relation-

ship between immigrant situation and emotional disturbance:

- *The shock effect of the immigrant experience, which may produce symptoms of confusion, disorganization, marked feelings of inadequacy, reactive depressions.* Unless specific experience is developed, this behavior may be misunderstood as symptomatic of serious personality disturbance, and it may lead to treatment that may be harmful.
- *The effect of an utter letdown after the continuous challenge of the very marked strain of the displaced-person experience.* At the point of reaching safety the ego does not want to fight anymore, and a rather total collapse takes place. Again this "collapse" may be misunderstood and treated wrongly.
- *The opposite often takes place, that is, the challenge of the immigration experience serves to pull together and to strengthen the use of self in relation to the requirement of the present.* Once these requirements are met to some degree and the newness is not experienced as a threat by the ego, certain personality disturbances are free to come out that have developed or have become accentuated under traumatic conditions.

These specifics of our experience necessitate a different use of the psychiatric specialist. For one thing, we need sometimes to help psychiatrists recognize these interrelationships between immigration experience and emotional disturbance and give them a chance to integrate this interrelationship in terms of their own skill. Concerning these clients, our shift in emphasis from the purpose of protection to the purpose of social adjustment in giving service has been marked, although we have by no means been able to carry out this shift to our satisfaction. We have seen considerable possibilities of giving help toward social adjustment instead of toward a very costly and often not helpful kind of protection. However, this requires specialized provisions by the agency for service, a more specialized understanding of and experience with the client and, finally, a more specific and focused use of the psychiatrist and of psychiatric resources.

The client with temporary visa status has special needs. These visas serve medical, educational, etc., purposes of the client. Help with carrying out this purpose, help where the client gets stranded after or while carrying out this purpose, help with clarification of purpose, which changes at times, may be mentioned as elements that enter into the professional functioning. Reality limitations for this group of clients are usually quite different from those of other clients; they are often extremely harsh. They often require making a choice between possibilities all of which seem frightening, such as separation of a family for an indefinite period, risking the migration status and risking the continuation of agency help, and migration to countries in which conditions for health and otherwise may be poor. Sometimes clients have had to wander from country to country in fear of government. The experience of government as an enemy from which one needs to protect oneself is natural in a group that has been put through the reality of camps, the expectation of gas chambers and other weird brutalities, that have seen members of their family, their community, of their group destroyed by government. The psychology of rescue, of looking for rescue, of expecting rescue needs to be understood. Clients bring expectations to the agency that are patterned on former experiences. It is meaningful for them to experience here that the agency can help them in loyalty to government so that the client need not be burdened with a split that they may have carried for so long. This client often brings extraordinary, realistic, and psychological burdens and differences to the worker. Such difference in the elements of reality and psychology makes specialization desirable.

In conclusion, I should like to point out once again that throughout all of these special situations there was a constant and clearly discernible trend; namely, the immigration situation as the focus of our helping process.