A Facilitator's Guide to Working With Separated and Divorced Women

women in transition

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Working with Separated and Divorced Women

Women in Transition, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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PREFACE

This manual is based on the work of women at one of the oldest feminist agencies in the country, Women in Transition. The contents are distilled from the experiences of thousands of women in the Philadelphia area who have participated as staff, volunteers, and clients in a peer-support program for separating and divorcing women. We have written this manual to help others who want to work with women in transition avoid repeating some of the mistakes and experimentation we have gone through.

Women in Transition (WIT) began in 1971 as an outgrowth of the Philadelphia Women's Liberation Center. Eight women of varying backgrounds came together to focus on the special needs of the many separated, divorced and single parent women who were calling the Center. This task force established a special program based on the conviction that women with the right kinds of support can turn the trauma of separation and divorce into a creative, growing process.

With financial support from local and national foundations and a full time staff of two, WIT opened its doors a decade ago. Since then, the staff has pioneered in both identifying the special needs of women and developing service models to meet those needs. Sharing our knowledge has been a major part of our mission. Through written materials, training of helping professionals and consultation with

community leaders, WIT has worked to increase and improve services for women. We now have a staff of twenty-four and provide a variety of counseling and community services to women in the Philadelphia metropolitan area.

Our intent in writing this manual is to give women throughout the country the information they need to conduct peer-support groups for separating and divorcing women. We usually communicate this information orally, through three-day training workshops. Moving from an oral, experiential training format to a written medium has been difficult. We have been concerned about whether our tone should be professional or conversational, whether we should include detailed instructions or assume the reader's familiarity with feminism and group techniques. We have chosen a midpoint on the continuum, so you may find yourself skipping some sections, or turning to the bibliography for more information on others. Our overriding goal in writing this manual has been to convey to future facilitators the philosophy which infuses all that we do: to work with women in a way that respects their potential as strong, independent people, capable of formulating and pursuing their own life goals.

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Bette carried the vision of the completed manuscript and protected her writing time. She has accomplished this task with a clear respect for the integrity of the program, WIT's herstory, and the woman in transition. Thanks also go to Roz Dutton, Coordinator of Personal Counseling, who has made many contributions to the peer-support program, and to Selina Riley, Jane Cohen, Diane Billingsley, and Sandra Boston, the staff who have supported this effort. Mona Cardell deserves credit for editing the final manuscript. Finally, we are grateful to the Pew Memorial Trust and the Philadelphia Foundation for recognizing the importance of this project and funding the development of the manual.

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PART I: INTRODUCTION TO WORKING WITH WOMEN IN TRANSITION

CHAPTER 1: THE SEPARATION AND DIVORCE EXPERIENCE

Working with women in transition requires more than good counseling skills and referral sources; the helping professional must understand the social factors that increase stress in divorcing women. This understanding is not easily attained, for there is no universal blueprint of the divorce process. Each divorce has unique elements, depending on such factors as age, number of children, employment status and socio-economic background. Yet the more than one million women who divorce each year face some common difficulties. These difficulties may be exacerbated by the traditional division of roles on the basis of sex--a tradition which characterizes "the American way of life." Traditional sex roles are not only present in the society as a whole; they also affect (and constrict) the behavior and options of women as individuals. Sex-role expectations may, in effect, function as obstacles which confront separating and divorcing women and make it difficult for them to achieve a positive resolution to the crisis of divorce. In the narrative which follows, we have synthesized research, theory, and the experiences of former clients to produce a description of what we believe are some of the critical elements in the process of divorce.

Emotional Roller Coaster

> I was a mess. I couldn't sleep; I couldn't eat. My hands shook and I had a lingering pain in my chest. Each day I'd go through the motions of caring for my son and the children I babysat for, waiting only for the moment my son was tucked in and asleep, so I could finally fall apart. I cried more in that first year of separation than I thought was humanly possible.

The woman in transition finds herself on an emotional roller coaster. Initial shock and disbelief are followed by feelings of fear and excitement, anger and grief, anxiety and hope. The high feelings of elation are quickly overpowered by the more persistent lows of depression. During the crisis of separation, a woman may be unable to complete routine tasks and may have difficulty making decisions.

The stress which accompanies the separation may cause insomnia, headaches, lack of energy, shortness of breath, or digestive disorders. Emotional stress also is linked with an increased risk of psychiatric disorders, suicide, motor vehicle accidents and various illnesses (Bachrach, 1975; Glick & Norton, 1978).

The emotional roller coaster disrupts the social network of the woman in transition. The intensity of her feelings can frighten, anger or confuse those around her. In need of support, she finds her behavior isolating her from friends and relatives. In need of a job, she fears that her

vulnerability will make her seem incompetent. Employed women fear jeopardizing their jobs by losing control of their emotions. The worst fear is that the roller coaster ride won't end.

Loss of Identity

> I can only feel mind-dulling pain, and anxiety racing through my body. Nothing makes sense right now. I feel like someone died--or is dying. I only have awareness of feeling loss and loneliness.

Losing the role of wife or partner can be a shattering experience; a woman may find herself questioning her competence as an adult. Traditionally, while a man attains adult status by achieving in the work world, a woman achieves status through marriage and motherhood (Hancock, 1980). With the end of her marriage and with family relations in chaos, the foundation of a woman's world is gone.

As a woman struggles with her inner reactions, she begins to confront the meaning of her loss of the title wife for her relations with others. When applying for a job or opening a bank account, she must decide if she is Miss, Mrs., or Ms. One of our clients spoke of feeling paralyzed as she agonized over which box to check off.

Separation changes the social network. When a woman tells her friends, family, and employers about the separation, their reactions vary. Some respond with encouragement

and support; others view the break-up of the marriage as indicative of her failure as a woman. Friendships change as she finds herself uncomfortable with (or left out of) the activities she participated in as part of a couple. This reshuffling and restructuring of the woman's social network disrupts her sense of place and belonging and prolongs grieving for the past.

Living on Her Own/Survival

> I was terrified of living alone. I never thought I'd make it.

Separation means that husband and wife will live apart. For the woman who has never lived on her own, life without a husband may appear frightening. Even the woman who has lived alone before marriage may experience difficulties. One woman expressed amazement at her level of fear and helplessness. Although she had handled living alone before marriage, after six years of sharing a home she felt unable to manage on her own. Adding to her difficulies were numerous messages from partners, family and the media that women can't really make it on their own. The woman whose husband's last words are "you'll drown without me" need only turn to the popular media for further reinforcement of her worst fears. Memories of "Blondie" and "Father Knows Best" merge with contemporary depictions of women as inadequate and helpless victims.

Discrimination in housing persists. Without her husband's income, a separated woman is often forced to move. Single women still have difficulties getting a mortgage, and single mothers often find that landlords are much more likely to rent to a person with a dog than to a woman with a child (Gazer, 1974).

Once she acquires housing, the newly single woman must take care of upkeep and maintenance tasks that have been traditionally defined as male. Although not all couples divide chores according to traditional roles, women still often lack experience in basic maintenance skills. They may worry about who will fix the roof, when is the car inspection due, what will happen if the furnace breaks down, or how the pictures will get hung. Household finances baffle the former wife who never paid the bills, balanced the checkbook, negotiated the mortgage, or selected the insurance. She may question her ability to stay fiscally and physically sound.

Emotional upheavals do not promote good decisions. Signing away her home, agreeing to an unfair property settlement, taking a job below her education level, rushing into a new and unrewarding relationship are but a few of the errors commonly made by a divorcing woman. Women traditionally have few of the worldly planning and problem-solving skills needed to make competent decisions, and the poor

decisions that often ensue lead to even lower self-esteem for divorcing women.

Single Parenting

> The baby didn't seem to notice that his father was gone, but my daughter (who was four) really fell apart. It was like she was in mourning. She lost weight, was sad and withdrawn from her friends, and she started wetting her bed. And I felt so done in myself that I honestly couldn't help her.

Children experience divorce as a major upheaval, though the long-term effects can be positive. Most children miss a two-parent family, a live-in father, and the material goods which the husbands provided. It is not uncommon for children to develop emotional and physical problems in the months following a parental separation (Magrab, 1978). Unfortunately, a mother who starts a new job (as many separating women must) may not have the time to respond fully to her children's increased needs.

As a separated woman realizes the impact that her separation has on her children's lives, she may feel guilty. The guilt may motivate her to do things for her children to make up for their not having a father at home. The single mother soon learns, however, that she cannot make up for her children's losses. Instead, she must involve the children in reorganizing the family system.

Trouble Getting Work

> I haven't worked since my children were born. I can cook and clean and run a house on a tight budget. I've been active in the church and organized quite a few activities there. But when I apply for a job, all they seem to want to know is what I've been doing for the last twelve years. When I tell them I've been a homemaker, it doesn't seem to count for anything.

A woman returning to the work force often finds that the behaviors and skills she acquired as a mother and homemaker are devalued in the job market. The stereotypically feminine behaviors that were useful for the homemaker are of little use in obtaining a good, well-paying job. Rewarded in the past for being nurturing, passive and conciliatory, women find that such behaviors do not help them successfully negotiate the transition into the world of work.

Women with children encounter additional problems in getting work. A woman with a family may find herself in a no-win situation where she cannot afford to work, and she cannot afford not to work. The unavailability of adequate, low-cost day care makes it difficult for many women to return to work. Many a woman uses as much as one-fourth of her earnings for childcare costs. The gap between the need for day care and the availability of such services remains enormous (Gazer, 1974).

Economic Pressure

> The jobs I've been able to find won't even cover my mortgage and babysitting costs. I'm on welfare now but I can't stay on once winter comes--they don't give me enough to pay for heating oil. It's getting colder every day, and I don't know what I'm going to do.

The economic facts of life are harsh for a separated woman. Though popular belief holds otherwise, most women receive little or no alimony or child support. Only 38 percent of court order support payments are honored at the end of the first year; and by the end of the tenth year, 79 percent of the fathers are making no contribution to their children's support (Cassety, 1979).

Women also encounter difficulties in obtaining credit. The National Commission of Consumer Finance found that separated or divorced women are often denied credit because the credit they establish during marriage follows their husbands, but not them. Businesses may refuse to accept alimony or child support as a reliable basis for granting credit (Gazer, 1974). Not surprisingly, divorced women may find themselves forced to re-establish their credit anew, on their own.

Economic pressure also results from the basic fact that women earn less than men. In 1978 the median income for men was $16,602; the median income for women was $9,641 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980). Women pursuing higher paying jobs encounter discriminatory hiring practices, inequitable

salary administration, and on-the-job harassment from male co-workers (Gazer, 1974). Considering such facts, it is no surprise that 40 percent of single female heads-of-household live below the poverty line.

Strengths and Resources

Although the difficulties described here are true, in part, for most women, it is also true that women bring many resources and strengths to the divorce experience. As wives and mothers, women acquire skills in management, organization and planning. Sensitivity to others' needs and feelings gives women expertise in human relations and communication. These skills prove invaluable in helping women cope with the emotional, social and financial upheavals of separation and divorce. Not only do these skills enable women to reorganize their lives (and their children's lives); they can also be transformed into marketable assets in the world of work. The Separation & Divorce Group helps each woman identify her particular strengths and resources as she strives to rebuild a meaningful life for herself and her family.

CHAPTER 2: WOMEN IN TRANSITION'S APPROACH TO SERVICE

The design of the Separation & Divorce Group reflects Women in Transition's approach to service. The group is based on a peer-support crisis intervention model within a feminist framework. Feminist theory determines the how and why of the group design. Elements of group process, feminist therapy, and crisis intervention theory intertwine throughout the eight weekly sessions. The group which results is one in which women can accomplish the following goals:

- Gain an understanding of the process of separation and divorce
- Understand sex-role socialization and how it relates to their present situation
- Acquire new skills for coping with emotional stress
- Develop more effective communication skills
- Enhance their ability to give direction and purpose to their lives
- Discover their personal strength and power

This section describes the general assumptions of feminist therapy and how they apply to the Women in Transition approach. The assumptions of crisis intervention models are also explained, followed by the specific stages of the divorce crisis and the developmental tasks each stage imposes. The content and structure of the group are related to the types of resources each woman needs to transform divorce into a growing process.

Feminist Therapy as a Framework for Growth

Feminist theory plays an integral role in the structure, content, and style of the Separation & Divorce Group. The feminist approach affirms egalitarian principles and sets forth several tenets as essential to the development of independent women and the eventual establishment of a sex-fair society.

Feminist therapy is based on an awareness of the detrimental effects which sexism in the social structure and the restrictions of prescribed sex roles have had on the mental health of women (Rawlings and Carter, 1977). While the phrase, "the personal is political," is central to the re-emergence of feminism, as feminists, we do not all agree on the philosophy of politics of feminism--nor do we translate feminism into our personal lives in the same way. We do, however, agree on the basic assumption that a woman's individual problems relate to her social context, and so do the solutions. The following paragraphs explain how the central ideas of feminist theory are translated into process in the Separation & Divorce Group.

Separate the internal from the external. Feminist theory encourages women to develop conscious insight into the sex-role expectations they have internalized, so that they can gain better control of their lives. In the Separation & Divorce Group, participants explore messages

they have received from family, friends and the media as to what it means to be a woman or a man. They also examine how these messages have affected the choices they have made and are about to make.

Validate the feminine experience. While individual differences are acknowledged and appreciated, the similarities of women's experience emerge as a powerful, uniting force in the Separation & Divorce Group.

Change rather than adjust. Many women with prior therapy experience have been told that their positive adjustment to the role of wife could save their marriages. The group design helps participants identify and successfully pursue their own life goals--whether they be marriage, an extended family, or other life and career choices. The social pressures on a woman to remain in a marriage or to remarry quickly are great. We provide a balance by encouraging each participant to explore alternatives for her life. She is encouraged to realize that her worth is not based on being someone's wife or someone's mother. The restoration of a balance between work and relationships is also encouraged.

Androgyny is powerful. We encourage the expression of both "masculine" and "feminine" behaviors in order to help participants claim the full range of their experience.

Women participate in exercises to discover "masculine" parts of themselves that may not have been acknowledged. Non-traditional behaviors, choices, traits, and preferences are explored and considered as viable options.

Equalization of relationships. Central to feminist philosophy are the equalization of relationships and access to power. Divorce and separation provide an optimal time for women to reevaluate their places in their families and to determine for themselves the types of relationships that they want in the future. The process of equalization is modelled in the nature of the relationship between the facilitator(s) and the members of the group. The role of the facilitator is leader/participant. While maintaining primary responsibility for the group process, the facilitator also shares her own personal experiences and participates in the exercises.

Enhance personal power. We assume that group members have the capacity to learn about themselves and their life options and, therefore, to make decisions about their lives. The structure of the sessions enables women to start or resume being in charge of their lives--to take control through a problem-solving approach.

Increase self-esteem and self-nurturance. The format of the group provides antidotes to the forced roles in which

women often find themselves. Participants are encouraged to identify their strengths as individuals and to reinforce the strengths of other group members. Women learn to trust and value their feelings, experiences and needs.

Crisis Intervention and The Separation & Divorce Group

The Separation & Divorce Group is essentially a situational crisis intervention for women experiencing marital distress. A situational crisis occurs when an event precipitates a state of distress so extreme that it severely taxes an individual's normal resources and coping skills. The crisis intervention model assumes that crises are a normal and natural part of adult life. The focus is on dealing with crisis in such a way that women reconstruct their lives at higher, rather than lower, levels of functioning. The crisis period is a unique and potentially positive opportunity to reexamine one's previous behavior and value structure. It is true that a woman's ability to cope with crisis depends on her patterns of responding to stress, her physical and financial resources, and the amount of warning and control she has over the crisis. However, a small amount of help can go a long way. The Separation & Divorce Group is designed to provide that help.

Several stages typically occur in response to any crisis. These stages are described below.

Stage I An event occurs, such as separation, that is so stressful that the individual does not have the coping mechanisms needed to deal with the new situation. The individual is in crisis.

Stage II A period of disorganization follows which is characterized by such behaviors as withdrawal, heightened anxiety, somatic distress and behaviors that seem inappropriate for the current situation.

Stage III Reorganization begins as the individual readjusts and corrects her perceptions of the situation. There is a heightened understanding of feelings and a sense of acceptance.

Stage IV The individual begins to reorient her life. She seeks new ways to cope in her relationships with friends, family, and social organizations.

Stage V The individual completes the process of readjustment as she develops new ways of coping with her situation.

(Derived from Pasework, A. & Albers, D., Crisis intervention: Theory in search of a program. Social Work, 1972, 17, 70-77, and Rapaport, The state of crisis: Some theoretical considerations. Social Service Review, 1962, 2, 212-3.)

For a woman to resolve a marital crisis effectively, she needs several things: (1) a realistic perception of her situation, (2) emotional and environmental support, and (3) adequate ways of coping. The support group model helps the woman in crisis to develop these three key elements.

CHAPTER 3: PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Conducting a Separation & Divorce Group may sound demanding and difficult. Certainly facilitators need to be mature, experienced and skilled individuals; however, skillful use of group structure and attention to group composition increase the likelihood of a rewarding experience for participants and facilitators alike.

This section covers the practical considerations that contribute to the success of the group. We have included suggestions about determining group composition, facilitation and supervision, the use of our structured model, and procedures for evaluation. We invite you to adapt our suggestions to the needs of your own particular agency or community setting.

Group Composition

The participants. The Separation & Divorce Group is designed for women who are actively considering a separation or who have separated or divorced within the previous two years. Participating in a peer-support group can be an emotionally demanding experience, and not all women in transition are appropriate for this particular group. In order to benefit from a support group, a woman must be able to listen as well as speak, to provide support for others as well as receive support, and to examine her life from a new perspec-

tive in order to change and grow (McMahon, 1979). Women with severe psychological problems, women with drug or alcohol problems that are not under control, and mentally retarded women are not suitable for this type of service.

Group size. The size of the group determines the level of individual participation. The optimal size for a Separation & Divorce Group falls within the small group range of 6 to 10.

The richness of difference. The Separation & Divorce Group model is designed to accommodate a multitude of differerences among women. Since divorce is not limited to any age, race, educational background or religious preference, women of many different types share similar pain, loneliness, and loss. A heterogeneous group helps women move from feeling isolated and personally inadequate to understanding the social and cultural factors that effect all women in transition. The opportunity to identify with women in different circumstances is one of the most empowering benefits of the group.

The Intake Interview

The most effective method for selecting group members is conducting individual intake interviews. The length, content and timing of these interviews depend on agency policies, but some type of pre-group screening is impera-

tive. (See Client Information Form in Appendix for a sample intake form.) Women who are not appropriate or who choose not to participate can be referred to alternative services.

The purposes of the intake interview are to:

--explore the woman's situation,

--identify her needs and goals,

--present the content and objectives of the group, and

--prepare her for participation in the group.

If at all possible, intake interviews should be conducted for all participants by the group facilitator. During intake the facilitator can help prospective group members develop goals that can be achieved within the framework of the group. Setting clear, concrete and measurable goals provides a vehicle for translating general goals into behavioral change. Goal setting emphasizes the ability of each woman to acknowledge both her responsibility for her life and her ability to take charge.

Facilitators

Personal and professional attributes. Facilitators should possess the following personal qualities and professional qualifications:

1. understanding of group dynamics
2. familiarity with feminist and crisis intervention theories

3. positive self-regard and comfort with their own behavior

4. willingness to disclose information about self when appropriate

5. insight into their own motivations for behavior and their impact on a group

6. ability to directly confront and support women in a manner that does not invite defensiveness

7. respect for individual differences and an ability to foster similar attitudes in others

8. willingness to take risks and gain insight into themselves as well as an ability to encourage the same in others

9. desire to work with women to encourage them to become strong self-sufficient adults

Role of the facilitator. The facilitator's many roles include those of leader, participant, resource expert, role model and sister. The facilitator sets the tone of the group interaction and is responsible for the "group maintenance" function. The "maintenance" tasks of the facilitator include attending to the emotional tone of the group and inviting group members to give feedback regarding their feelings about the group. Creating a safe and nurturing environment is the primary responsibility of the facilitator.

Introducing the structured exercises and the ground rules establishes the framework for group learning and interaction. Ground rules for group participation, such as no interrupting or advice giving, imply respect for each

woman's contribution. By "calling" any violation of the ground rules, the facilitator increases feelings of safety and trust in the group.

It is critical that the facilitator attend not only to the general tone and atmosphere of the group, but also to the level of participation of each individual. Any members who are monopolizing or who appear to be withdrawn or unusually quiet may require help. The facilitator should observe how the group is using time--racing through the agenda or responding sluggishly. The facilitator also needs to "watch the clock" to insure that the agenda is followed and group goals are accomplished.

Emotional tone and atmosphere vary widely from topic to topic and group to group. The group may seem particularly angry and depressed or bubbling with excitement. Reflecting perceptions of feelings to the group provides valuable information to each group member and, additionally, to the facilitator. An emotional response is neither right nor wrong, but gives a woman one more clue about her individual issues.

Telling group members what they should or should not do is a trap that must be avoided. Rather, the facilitator should question and clarify, helping women to discover new ways of getting their needs met, and encouraging women in their journey of self-discovery.

By observing the process of the group, including the nature of the interactions between herself and the members, the facilitator can learn a great deal of information that proves helpful in working with the group. The facilitator may wish to note her observations systematically after each session. The Group Process Form (see Appendix) is useful for this purpose.

Facilitators also function as role models and group participants. Facilitators participate in group activities and need to share their personal experiences comfortably and appropriately. While this is not the place for a facilitator to work through her unresolved issues, it is a place for her to be a genuine person, complete with strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures. It is the facilitator who models the level of sharing and risk-taking for the group. The facilitator also is a model of a woman who has worked on personal problems and has survived and grown.

Co-facilitating. Although the Separation & Divorce Group can be conducted by one facilitator, two facilitators are optimal. Co-facilitators model a cooperative rather than competitive relationship between women in leadership positions (McMahon, 1979; Eberhardt, 1976). Co-facilitators share group maintenance functions and thereby can give more attention to the dynamics of the group. While one facilitator leads an exercise, the other monitors the group dynamics. Co-facilitating also has many benefits for the

facilitators. Rotating relieves the stress of being on stage all the time. By evaluating each group experience together, the facilitators gain a clearer perspective on what is happening in the group. Co-facilitation also gives women with differing levels of personal and professional experience an opportunity to facilitate the group. For example, a skilled group leader with no personal experience with separation and divorce can be paired with a former group participant with less refined group skills.

Supervision

The professional and emotional demands of facilitating suggest the need for ongoing supervision. Indeed, good supervision can mean the difference between a mediocre and a successful group experience. A skilled supervisor enhances the amounts of risk-taking and growth for all involved with the group. The goals of supervisory sessions are:

1. To enhance and insure the quality of the group experience for the clients,

2. To provide the facilitator(s) with resources for problem-solving and a vehicle for professional growth.

Supervisory sessions should occur regularly. (One supervision session for every two meetings of the group is recommended.) Four basic topics which should be covered each session are the participation of the individuals in the group, the dynamics among group members, the relationship

between co-facilitators, and the relationship between the facilitator(s) and the group.

Supervision of some kind is essential. Supervision provided by a more skilled and experienced colleague is preferred. If such supervision is unavailable, co-facilitators can provide supervision for one another ("peer supervision") or can meet regularly with a co-worker who has group experience (consultation).

Using Our Structured Model

The Separation & Divorce Group operates on a structured, time-limited eight session model. The two-hour sessions are organized along two interconnected continuums: from explorations of the past and present to focus on the future; from introspective feelings to working on action in the outside world. The content and structure of each session are designed to promote maximum personal and group learning within a relatively short time period. The chapter which follows this provides detailed descriptions of the activities to be covered in each session.

Our descriptions of each session include an overview of the agenda, the time required for each activity, the goals of the session, instructions for introducing and carrying out each activity, and the materials that will be needed. Handouts described in the text are located at the end of the description of each session. The time allowances provided

for each activity are estimates and should be used as guides rather than as rigid requirements. Important discussions and meaningful group experiences should not be cut off in order to stay on schedule. Since the sessions are very full, there are occasions when the entire agenda cannot be covered. Facilitators may wish to decide in advance which activity will be omitted if time is short. In general, the shorter activities may be omitted without diminishing the impact of the session, while omission of the longer activities would be less acceptable. Whenever possible, group members should be included in decisions to change the agenda. In order to maximize time, the group and facilitator may turn go-rounds into dyads, brainstorms into "homework," or verbal experiences into written handouts.

Helping the group members to understand the feelings, perceptions and interactions generated in an exercise can be more important than the exercise itself. The more conflictual and probing the exercise, the more time needs to be allowed for "processing" what happened. Each individual needs time to share her own reactions to the experience. The facilitator should ensure that all feelings are acknowledged and dealt with so that they do not carry over negatively into other sessions. It is important that opposing attitudes and opinions be validated. "Process" questions are included at the end of each exercise. These questions help bring many important thoughts and feelings to light.

Terminology. The instructions to facilitators contain group process terminology. The major concepts we use are defined below:

Brainstorm: group members, individually or as a whole, offer a number of responses to a given question without comment or discussion.

Lecturette: short presentation or "rap" given by the facilitator.

Lifeline: diagram developed by each member which portrays a set of events and experiences over a period of years.

Process: discussion of participants' reactions (emotional, intellectual, and physical) to a particular exercise or activity.

Go-round: an exercise in which each member in turn responds to a given set of instructions. No interruptions or comments are made until each member has spoken.

Dyad: each woman is paired with a partner for a structured exercise.

Evaluation

On-going evaluation of the group experience by the facilitators and group participants is an integral part of delivering quality services. Evaluation provides essential feedback on how the group is doing as a whole, how group members are doing individually, and the effectiveness of facilitation. Evaluation should be a part of the life of the group, occurring after each session and at the conclusion of the group.

Group members' evaluation of each session is built into the model. Every session ends with a go-round in which women share one positive and one negative of the session. Since women often hesitate to give negative feedback, it is important that the facilitator(s) give permission for and model the appropriate use of negative feedback. This helps women learn to assert their feelings and gives the facilitators and other group members critical information as to the well-being of the group.

During the eighth session group members should be given the opportunity to evaluate the group experience as a whole. Here again, women should be encouraged to contribute both positive and negative feedback. Providing a written questionnaire enables women to structure their thoughts and gives facilitators a concrete record of each woman's growth as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the group. (See Appendix for a sample Evaluation Form.)

The facilitator should take time after each session to process the group. A written form (see Group Process Form in the Appendix) is useful in structuring a uniform evaluation process. Keeping a written record allows facilitators to get a sense of the flow of the group, and helps to identify the highlights and problem areas of the group's work together. Facilitators can also complete an Evaluation Form at the end of the group, but may find processing the group experience at length with a supervisor to be more beneficial.

Keeping individual client records will also be useful. The use of standardized measures such as the "SCL 90 R" may be required by some funding sources. Keeping tabs on clients' growth helps promote a consistent quality of service delivery, as well.

A Personal Message From the Staff of Women in Transition

The challenge and excitement of working with women in transition is that each group presents a unique opportunity to use structure, oneself, and the strengths of individual members to create a genuine growing experience for all. As a facilitator, it is a privilege to witness the process through which women come together, become a group, and then leave stronger, more confident, with purpose and direction. We extend this experience to you and welcome you to the sisterhood of Women in Transition Separation & Divorce Group facilitators.

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PART 2

THE SEPARATION & DIVORCE GROUP MODEL

SESSION I	INTRODUCTION
SESSION II	ANGER & DEPRESSION SELF-VALIDATION & SELF-NURTURANCE
SESSION III	UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP
SESSION IV	ASSERTIVENESS
SESSION V	SEX-ROLE SOCIALIZATION MOTHERHOOD
SESSION VI	SEXUALITY
SESSION VII	VALUES CLARIFICATION PROBLEM-SOLVING
SESSION VIII	ENDINGS...BEGINNINGS

SESSION I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

I. Beginnings - 65 minutes

A. Brief Presentation: Purpose and Expectations of the Group

B. Go-Round: Expectations of the Group

C. Dyad: Positives and Negatives of My Present Living Situation

D. Drawing: Symbol of Myself

II. Stages in the Process of Divorce - 25 minutes

A. Lecturette: Stages of Divorce

B. Discussion: Stages of Divorce

III: On Becoming a Single Woman - 20 minutes

A. Dyad: Being Single

B. Discussion: Being Single

IV. Ending - 10 minutes

A. Phone Swap

B. Closing Evaluation

SESSION I

Goals

1. To begin to connect and function as a group

2. To begin the transition from wife (or partner) to single woman

Materials Needed

Paper, crayons or pens, hand-out: Stages in the Process of Divorce

Activities

I. Beginnings

Objectives:

- To clarify goals for group participation

- To enhance listening skills

- To make a connection with another person in the group

A. Brief Presentation: Purpose and expectations of the group - 15 minutes

1. Facilitator makes a presentation like the following one, being sure to include all relevant points:

"The Separation & Divorce Group provides an opportunity for you to begin the process of thinking of yourself as a priority. The group will help you learn new skills that will enhance your functioning--e.g. assertiveness; coping with anger and depression. In addition, this will be a place where you can connect with other women and get support, and begin to recognize and develop your strengths. As difficult as times of transition often are, we believe that such transitions provide unique opportunities for positive change, growth and self-empowerment."

SESSION I

2. Group Business

    1. Length of group

    2. Overview of topics

    3. Attendance

        a. Can miss only two sessions

        b. Importance of promptness

        c. Contact facilitator if you cannot attend a session

3. Leaderless group. Members will have the opportunity to continue meeting without the facilitators at the conclusion of the eight scheduled sessions.

4. Any additional information appropriate to your agency procedures.

5. Group norms and rules

    a. Confidentiality

    b. No interrupting

    c. No advice-giving

    d. Using "I" statements

    e. Listening well to others--i.e. the give and take of the group

6. Role of facilitator. The facilitator is not there as a therapist, expert or authority. The facilitator's role is to provide a structure, to be a resource and to point out new options and ways of coping--i.e. to help develop a growth-oriented (emotionally safe) climate.

B. <u>Go-round</u>: <u>Expectations for group</u> - 15 minutes

Facilitator has each woman tell what she hopes to get from the group. (Optional: Facilitator records responses on newsprint.)

Process: Facilitator leads discussion on similarities and differences among the goals of group members. She lets group members know if their expectations are realistic.

C. Dyad: Positives and Negatives of My Living Situation - 20 minutes

Facilitator asks women to pair up and spend five minutes each discussing the positives and negatives of their present living situation. Then in a go-round have each woman briefly report on what her partner said.

Process:
- How did it feel to do this exercise?
- Facilitator points out how a dyad is a good example of group life--there is a time for listening, and a time for talking--a real give and take.

D. Drawing: Symbol of Myself - 15 minutes

Have each woman draw a symbol (or picture) of herself that reflects her world and how she is feeling. Have women share and explain pictures in go-round.

Process:
- How did it feel to do this exercise?
- Did you learn anything new?
- Are there any surprises in your picture?
- What would you like to change in your picture?

II. Stages in the Process of Divorce - 25 minutes

Objectives:

- To learn the stages in the process of divorce
- To identify which stages they have experienced

A. Lecturette: Stages of Divorce - 10 minutes

SESSION I

Facilitator hands out "Stages in the Process of Divorce." She explains "Stages in the Process of Divorce" with an introduction like the following one:

"Researchers, mental health professionals and survivors of divorce have looked at the process people usually go through as they live through a divorce. In general, it seems that people's reactions to a separation and their experiences after separation follow a pattern. These five stages are one way of looking at the process of divorce."

Stages in the Process of Divorce

1. Denial. Denial often takes place while a couple is still married. This stage can be thought of as "emotional divorce;" the couple is still legally married, but they no longer relate or meet each other's emotional needs. The couple might say they have "learned to live" with their less than perfect marriage. Or a woman who has been abandoned might say she is sure her spouse will return.

2. Loss and Depression. A stressful event occurs and separation can no longer be denied. This stage is characterized by feelings of grief, depression, loss, isolation, and an inability to communicate.

3. Anger and Ambivalence. This stage may start at the time when the legal process begins. There may be arguing over custody, division of property, etc. This may be the first time a person is aware of her/his anger. Anger is often accompanied by feelings of ambivalence..."Have we done enough to save the marriage?" This stage is an extremely difficult and critical one; successful expression and resolution of anger and ambivalence is necessary before moving on to the next stage.

4. Reorientation of Life-style and Identity. Being divorced (or separated) becomes a reality. Identity must be reworked in all spheres of life (personal, vocational, sexual and social).

5. Acceptance and New Level of Functioning. Acceptance comes about when the divorced person begins

to feel adequate socially, sexually, and vocationally. New patterns of interaction have developed that are satisfying and do not include the ex-spouse.

"Of course, in real life the stages are rarely so clearly defined and delineated. The stages can overlap, or you can even bounce back and forth between several."

B. Discussion: Stages of Divorce - 20 minutes

Facilitator encourages women to share with the group details of their particular situations--i.e. are they still living with partner? Separated? Divorced? How long, etc.

1. Which of the stages have you experienced?

2. Which stage(s) do you see yourself in now?

3. Would you like to be somewhere else?

4. Does the concept of stages in the process of divorce make sense to you in terms of your own experience? If not, how does your own experience differ?

III. On Becoming a Single Woman - 20 minutes

Objectives:

- To become aware of feelings and attitudes toward being single

- To identify implications of being single

A. Dyad: On Being Single - 10 minutes

How I feel about being single, or feel about becoming single (for women who are still married).

B. Discussion: Being Single - 10 minutes

1. How did it feel discussing being single?

2. What did you discover that was new for you?

3. What negative messages do we receive about being single?

4. What positive messages do we receive about being single?

IV. Ending - 10 minutes

A. Phone Swap - 5 minutes

Collect names and phone numbers and let women know you will have a group list made up for next week. Then have women write their names and phone numbers on small slips of paper. Facilitator collects the slips and has each woman pick a paper out of the pile. Ask each woman to call the woman whose name she has chosen during the week between sessions. Explain that these phone calls will help the group members to begin the important process of giving/ receiving support from each other.

B. Go-round: Evaluation - 5 minutes

Facilitator asks group members to share their experience of the session, including one positive aspect and one negative aspect of the meeting.

Optional: Have women briefly write their feelings and/or reactions to this first session on progress notes. You can keep these progress notes throughout the group and then give the notes to the women when the group ends.

SESSION IV

"Our topic today is assertiveness. We will have the opportunity to learn just what assertiveness is and a chance to practice assertive behavior. Some people are intimidated or frightened by the idea of assertiveness. But assertiveness is simply good, clear and direct communication. Many of us have been taught indirect methods of communication. For example, as a teenager, when you were attracted to a boy, did you call him up and ask him for a date? How did you get his attention?" (Give group time to respond.)

"Today we will look at four styles of behavior and communication. Assertive behavior is an important tool in our efforts to take charge of our lives."

B. Hand-out: Definition of Assertive, Aggressive and Passive Behavior - 30 minutes

Facilitator asks for two volunteers--one to role play with facilitator, one to record the group's responses on the chart. Facilitator then role plays direct aggressive, indirect aggressive, passive and assertive behavior.
(Suggestions for role plays: returning a defective item, asking friends to return borrowed money, etc.)

Remind the group to be aware of all the ways you are communicating--verbally, non-verbally, etc. After each role play, have the volunteer record group's responses on the chart.

	Passive	Aggressive -Direct	Aggressive -Indirect	Assertive
Emotions				
Language (Word choice, voice tone)				
Body Language				
Response of Other				

- developed by Barbara Gilin

SESSION IV

D. Go-round: Difficult Situations - 20 minutes

Have women describe a situation in which it is difficult for them to be assertive and explain why they think that particular situation is difficult.

Process:
- Is there a common "fear" regarding the consequences of being assertive?
- Do you think it's harder for women to be assertive than it is for men?
- Is assertiveness "feminine" or "masculine"?
- Do you have any role models of assertive women in your family or among your friends or acquaintances?

E. Role Play: Difficult Situations..."Take Two" - 30 minutes

1. Facilitator asks for volunteer who would like to role play a situation in which it is difficult for her to be assertive. The volunteer can choose to "play" herself or the person with whom she is having problems. After the role play:

   a. Ask volunteer to evaluate herself. What were her strong and weak points?

   b. Ask group to give positive and negative feedback to the volunteer.

   c. How could the volunteer's assertive behavior be enhanced or improved?

Optional: Repeat role play in light of discussion and feedback, or

2. If women cannot decide on a "difficult situation," facilitator can explore one of the following areas with the group, using role plays and discussion.

   a. Asserting yourself with your children; for example, asking them to clean up their rooms, do homework, go to bed.

b. Asserting yourself on the job; e.g., asking for a raise, refusing an extra assignment, asking for a day off.

c. Asserting yourself with family; e.g., saying no to invitations or "fix-ups," asking for help, asking for privacy.

III. Progressive Muscle Relaxation - 15 minutes

Objective:

- To learn progressive muscle relaxation as a tool for decreasing anxiety.

Facilitator introduces exercise as follows:

"Anxiety detracts from assertive body image because it shows in your behavior. Learning to relax can help you to combat anxiety and can be a good complement to assertion. It can help you to feel more in control of your body and more in control of yourself. We will now do an exercise that will teach you deep muscle relaxation."

Facilitator should lower the lights and read the following to the group:

"Make yourself comfortable. Take off your shoes. Lie down on the floor or lean back in a chair. Relax your arms at your sides and let your feet fall naturally. Close your eyes.

"Now, stretch your legs as far as they can go. Turn your toes under and tighten the muscles very, very tight. Hold it. And now also tighten the muscles in your calves and those in your thighs. Make your entire leg tight, and hold it, hold it, hold it. And now, relax all the muscles in your toes, all the muscles in your calves, and all the muscles in your thighs. Let your legs go completely limp. And now, feel that wonderful feeling of relaxation coming up from your toes, up your calves, up your thighs. Feeling wonderfully relaxed, beautifully relaxed, very calm, and very relaxed. Feeling beautifully, wonderfully relaxed.

SESSION IV

"Now, I want you to stretch out your hands. Make a fist. Feel the tightness, and now make it tighter. Hold it. And now also tighten the muscles in your wrist, in your forearm, and upper arm. Let your arm go completely limp. Feeling wonderfully relaxed, beautifully relaxed, very calm, very relaxed.

"Now, I want you to arch your back backwards, raise your chest, and tighten your stomach muscles. Make them as tight as you can, tighter, and tighter. Hold it, hold it. And now, let go, just let go, and you get that wonderful feeling of relaxation. Just feel the muscles relax from your back, from your chest, from your stomach.

"And now, I want you to tighten the muscles in your face, around your mouth, the muscles in your chin, around your eyes and your forehead. Make them tighter, and tighter. Hold it, hold it. And now, let go, just let go and get that wonderful feeling of relaxation, from all the muscles of your cheeks, the muscles of your chin, and the muscles around your mouth, feeling wonderfully relaxed, beautifully relaxed, very calm, very relaxed, wonderfully relaxed.

"Now, I want you to take a very deep breath and hold it, hold it, hold it. Now slowly, slowly, start to let it out, and you're letting out all your tensions, all your frustrations, your anxieties, feeling wonderfully well, wonderfully, wonderfully well.

"Now, focus inside your body and notice where you feel any movement in your muscles because of your breathing. Any place you feel tense, you can try imagining that you can breathe into that tight place, as though you could actually exhale through that body part. Imagine that the breath relaxes the sore muscle a little as it moves through that part. Breathing into a body part is something you can do anywhere, any time you feel tense or nervous. Find that tight place and breathe into it now.

"Now, relax your jaw and open your mouth so that you can exhale through your mouth. You don't need to breathe heavily. Just stay with the relaxed natural breathing now. Inhale through your nose; exhale through your mouth; and pause at the end of the exhalation, before you breath in again.

SESSION IV

"Now, as I count down from ten to one, think of a scene that makes you feel calm, that makes you relaxed, and that gives you a feeling of well being. This can be an outdoor scene, such as lying on a beach.

"With your eyes closed, see that scene in all its details, and as I'm counting down from ten to one, you are going to find yourself more and more deeply relaxed and you will have a feeling of well being. Calm and relaxed, and wonderfully well. Just relax.

"I'm going to count now: 10, 9, going deeper, 8, 7, still deeper, 6, 5, very, very deep, deep, deeply relaxed, 4, 3, very deeply, 2, 1, very calm, very relaxed, very calm, very relaxed, deeply relaxed. See your calm scene in all its details now: smell the smells; hear the sounds; see the colors.

Think of nothing now but relaxation, feeling wonderfully relaxed, calm, feeling wonderfully well, just relaxed, calm, relaxed, feeling wonderfully well.

"When I count to 5, you will open your eyes, you'll feel calm, you'll feel relaxed, you'll feel wonderfully well. 1, 2, coming up slowly, 3, 4, coming up, feeling relaxed, feeling calm, but alert, 5,--Open your eyes, feel relaxed, feel calm, and feel wonderfully well."

* This exercise should take about 15 minutes to complete *

(Derived from Rush, A.K. Getting clear: Body work for women. California: The Bookworks, 1973 and Susskind, unpublished manuscript, 1972.)

Process: - How did it feel to do this exercise?

- Forms of progressive relaxation can be done anywhere--on a bus, at home, before a job interview, before a difficult encounter, etc. Is this relaxation method something you'd like to incorporate into your life?

IV. Closing Evaluation - 5 minutes

Hand-Out

DEFINITION OF ASSERTIVE, AGGRESSIVE AND PASSIVE BEHAVIOR

Aggressive Behavior:

Direct: Standing up for oneself without considering the rights of others. Aggressive behavior puts down the other person.

Indirect: Standing up for one's rights by acting indirectly and through manipulation. The goal of indirect aggressive behavior is to get what you want without asking for it directly.

Passive Behavior: Failing to stand up for one's rights or doing so in an ineffectual way. The passive goal is to pacify or soothe the other person.

Assertive Behavior: Standing up for one's rights without violating the rights of others. The goal of assertion is to communicate directly and work towards a solution that meets both people's needs.

SESSION V

SEX ROLE SOCIALIZATION/MOTHERHOOD

Overview

I. Sex Role Socialization - 60 minutes

A. Brainstorm: Little Girls Do, Little Girls Don't...

B. Go-round: The Man and the Woman Within Me

C. Brainstorm: The Man and the Woman Within Me--Part 2

II. Motherhood - 55 minutes

A. Go-round: Motherhood--Choices and Obligations

B. Brainstorm: Coping with Single Parenting

-or-

C. Drawing and Chart: My Mother, Myself

III. Closing Evaluation - 5 minutes

SESSION V

Goals

1. To understand the meaning and consequences of sex-role socialization

2. To see androgyny as an alternative to the restrictions of traditional sex roles

3. To demystify motherhood

Materials Needed

Newsprint, marker, paper, crayon, newsprint chart: "My Mother, Myself"

Activities

I. Sex-Role Socialization - 60 minutes

Objectives:

- To identify sex role messages we received

- To identify our "feminine" and "masculine" behaviors

- To introduce the concept of androgyny

A. Brainstorm: "Little Girls Do, Little Girls Don't ...- 30 minutes

Facilitator introduces exercise, including the following points:

"The purpose of this exercise is to look at the spoken and unspoken messages we received while growing up about what was acceptable or unacceptable behavior for boys and girls. Search your memories and complete the following phrases." (Facilitator records responses on newsprint.)

Little girls do...
Little girls don't...
Little boys do...
Little boys don't...
-or-
A good woman should...
A good man should...

SESSION V

Process: - Where did we get these messages?

- How did you deal with these messages as a child?

- How do you feel your career choice was affected?

- Did you have any role models for sex-role behavior that didn't fit into the stereotypes?

- How do these messages affect you now?

B. Go-round: The Man and the Woman Within Me - 10 minutes

Have each woman complete the following sentences: "I'm glad I'm a woman because...;" "I wish I were a man because..."

Process

C. Brainstorm: The Man and the Woman Within Me--Part 2 - 20 minutes

1. Facilitator introduces the concept of androgyny as follows:

   "Becoming androgynous means allowing expression of the full range of your responses and your personality. Androgynous individuals express and experience the parts of themselves that are typically called "masculine" as well as parts of themselves that are typically called "feminine." Strict adherence to sex-role stereotypes results in closing off parts of yourself; in discriminating against yourself. Androgyny enables us to claim the full range of our behavior."

2. Have women form dyads. Each woman should tell her dyad partner what "masculine" and "feminine" characteristics she possesses (e.g. strong, independent, play baseball, sew, cook, etc.)

From this brainstorm ask dyad partners to create an androgynous person who embodies the masculine and feminine characteristics they have (or would like to have).

If there is time, have dyads share their androgynous person with the group.

II. Motherhood - 55 minutes

Objectives:

- To examine our feelings and attitudes regarding motherhood

- To learn new ways of coping with single parenting

Note to facilitators:

Motherhood is a relevant issue to women, regardless of whether or not they have children. However, the way this topic is addressed should vary according to the composition of your particular group. Groups that are primarily composed of mothers should include Exercise B (Coping with Single Parenting). Groups with a more even mixture of mothers and non-mothers may choose to divide their time between Exercises B and C (My Mother, Myself). Groups with no mothers should eliminate B completely. Feel free to adjust the structure of this section to meet the needs of your group.

A. Go-round: Motherhood--Choices and Obligations - 20 minutes

1. Women with children complete the following sentences: "I'm glad I'm a mother because...;" "I wish I weren't a mother because..."

2. Women without children complete these sentences: "I'm glad I'm not a mother because...;" "I wish I were a mother because..."

Process: - How did it feel to do this exercise?

- Did (do) you feel you had a choice about having children?

- If yes, how did you decide to become (or not become) a mother?

- What messages have you received from family, friends, and society regarding motherhood?

B. Brainstorm: Coping with Single Parenting - 30 minutes

Facilitator asks group to consider the problems they have encountered (or expect to encounter) as single parents. Facilitator records responses on a newsprint chart divided into two columns: "PROBLEMS" and "SOLUTIONS." (Problems should include childcare, loneliness, money, time alone, etc.) For each problem, have a group brainstorm possible solutions.

C. Drawing and Chart: My Mother, Myself - 30 minutes

1. Facilitator asks women to think back to when they were six years old. Have women draw a picture of how they saw their mothers at that age. Ask women to share their drawings with the group.

2. Facilitator shows women the following chart:

My Mother	Myself
Areas to consider:	
Physical	
Emotional	
Body Language	
Vocational	
Hobbies	

Facilitator asks women to create a "My Mother, Myself" chart on the back of their drawings, using the categories as a way of comparing themselves with their mothers.

SESSION V

Process: - How did it feel to do this exercise?

- Were there any unexpected similarities or differences?

- How can we measure the impact our mothers have had on us?

III. Closing Evaluation - 5 minutes

SESSION VI

SEXUALITY

Overview

I. Past Messages and Experiences - 75 minutes

A. Brainstorm: Ice-Breaker

-or-

Discussion: Ice-Breaker

B. Lifeline--My Sexual Life

II. The Present and Future - 50 minutes

A. Written Exercise: Sexual Attitudes and Behavior Scale

B. Discussion and Brainstorm: Moving On...Assertive Sexuality

III. Closing Evaluation - 5 minutes

SESSION VI

Goals

1. To give women an opportunity to explore their sexual attitudes and behavior, in a safe, supportive and non-judgmental environment

2. To provide information and support for sexual options

3. To help women become more sexually assertive and independent

Materials Needed

Newsprint, markers, crayons, hand-out: Sexual Attitude and Behavior Scale

Activities

I. Past Messages and Experiences - 75 minutes

Objectives:

- To share sexual experiences, both positive and negative

- To begin identifying sexual options

- To increase sexual self-knowledge

A. Brainstorm: Ice-Breaker - 15 minutes

Facilitator hangs up four sheets of newsprint, each sheet containing one of the following headings: vagina, penis, masturbation and intercourse. Facilitator then distributes crayons to group and instructs them to write down (on the appropriate sheet) all the synonyms they can think of for each heading. Let group know that they have only five minutes to list as many words as they can.

Process: - How did it feel to do this?

- Did you learn any new words?

- Do you see anything significant or interesting about the kinds of slang we use when talking about sex?

SESSION VI

Note to facilitators: Some groups of women might find the above exercise highly offensive. Such groups can use the following exercise:

Discussion: Ice-Breaker - 15 minutes

1. How do you feel about tonight's topic?

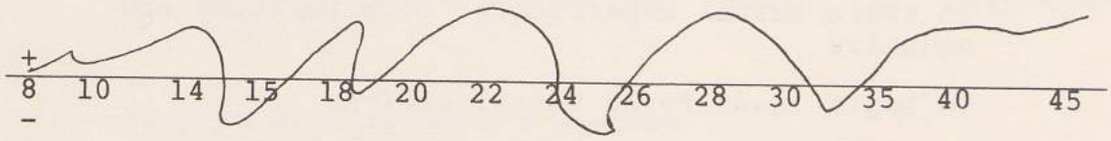
2. What are your concerns and fears about discussing sexuality openly?

3. What are your hopes and expectations for this session?

4. What would help you feel safe?

B. Lifeline: My Sexual Life - 60 minutes

1. Facilitator demonstrates how to develop a sexual lifeline, aware that she is modeling the level of sharing and risk for the group.



Instructions should include the following points: "In order to develop a sexual lifeline, plot a line that symbolizes your sex life. Mark off ages that are significant to you. Positive, satisfactory experiences would be above the center line; negative, unsatisfactory experiences would be below the center line."

2. Ask women to plot their sexual lifeline on individual sheets of newsprint.

3. Go-round: Have women share their lifelines. (Groups of more than eight should divide into two groups to allow for sufficient time.) Remind women that they should share only as much as they feel comfortable having the group know.

   Process: - What did you learn from doing this?

SESSION VI

II. The Present and Future - 50 minutes

Objectives:

- To identify our attitudes and values regarding sexuality

- To consider ways we would like to change our sex lives

A. Written Exercise: Sexual Attitude and Behavior Scale - 20 minutes

(Scale is from Louise Yolton Eberhardt, A Woman's Journey, Baltimore, Md: New Community Press, 1978, Vol. II, p. 11)

Facilitator introduces the activity as follows:

"Having looked at our sexual lifelines we all have a fairly good sense of what our sexuality has been in the past. Now we are going to take some time to look at the present."

(Facilitator distributes the Sexual Attitude and Behavior Scale.)

"This scale gives us an opportunity to look at both our attitudes toward sex and our actual sexual behavior. Circle the number on the scale that shows where you are now; put an arrow where you would like to be. You will not be asked to share your responses with the group."

Process:
- How did it feel to do this exercise?
- What did you discover about yourself?
- Were your attitudes and behavior similar? Different?

B. Discussion: Moving On...Assertive Sexuality - 30 minutes

SESSION VI

1. Ask women to keep in mind the areas they had identified as wanting to change on the Sexual Attitude and Behavior Scale. Then instruct women to choose one thing they would like to change and imagine what they will have to do to make this change.

2. Discussion

   a. What inhibits us from making changes? (Should include fear, shyness, societal proscriptions, etc.)

   b. How much are we affected by society's attitudes toward the sexuality of divorcees or single women?

   c. What options do we in fact have as single women?

3. Assertive Sexuality

   Facilitator introduces the exercise:

   "In order to make changes in our sexuality, we need to be clear about what we want to change and we need to feel comfortable in our right to make the change. Together we will compile a Sexual Bill of Rights--i.e., a list of those sexual rights you would like to have as a single woman."

   Facilitator records responses on newsprint--e.g., right to say no, right to have an orgasm, right to ask for what I do or do not want.

   If they wish, group members can create individual Bills of Rights at home.

III. <u>Closing Evaluation</u> - 5 minutes

Hand-out

SEXUAL ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR SCALE

Directions: Circle the number on the scale that shows where you are now; draw an arrow to where you would like to be.

Unable to communicate verbally with partner my sexual likes and dislikes.									Able to communicate verbally with a partner my sexual likes and dislikes.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Little knowledge of what excites and turns me on sexually.									A great deal of knowledge of what turns me on sexually.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Uncomfortable touching or looking at my body nude.									Very comfortable touching and looking at my body nude.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Masturbation is a sin, wrong, or I feel guilty about doing it.									Masturbation is healthy and a way to care for myself.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sexual fulfillment will come to me if I am with the right partner.									Sexual fulfillment is something I must work on and actively seek by telling my partner what I like.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I get few of my sexual needs taken care of.									I get most of my sexual needs taken care of.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I feel my body is not very beautiful.									I feel my body is very beautiful.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Others find my body very unattractive. — Others find my body very attractive.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I must be in love to really enjoy sex. — I can enjoy sex depending on my decision and not on whether I am in love.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I usually find myself giving to others sexually and doing what pleases them. — I find I want to give and get pleasure equally.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I fake orgasms often. — I never fake orgasms.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

My sexual activity tends to always be the same. — I like to engage in a variety of sexual behavior and activities.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I never masturbate. — I often masturbate.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I seldom or never have orgasms. — I usually have orgasms.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

SESSION VII

VALUES CLARIFICATION/PROBLEM SOLVING

Overview

I. Leftover Business/New Relationships - 45 minutes

A. Discussion: Leftover Business

B. Brainstorm: New Relationships--Fears and Fantasies

II. Values Clarification - 35 minutes

A. Lecturette: Taking Charge

B. Brainstorm and Discussion: Who Am I?

III. Problem Solving - 30 minutes

A. Group Discussion: Force Field Analysis

IV. Closing Evaluation - 5 minutes

SESSION VII

Goals

1. To help women clarify their values in a supportive and non-judgmental environment

2. To introduce skills that will enhance women's abilities to give direction and purpose to their lives

3. To empower women

Materials Needed

Newsprint, markers, paper, pens, Handouts: Force Field Analysis, Homework

Activities

I. Leftover Business - 45 minutes

Objective:

- To give women an opportunity to share any issues or questions raised by the last session.

A. Discussion: Leftover Business - 15-30 minutes

Facilitator asks group if anyone has any issues, concerns, or questions left over from the last session that she would like to share with the group.

B. Brainstorm: New Relationships--Fears and Fantasies - 30 minutes

1. Facilitator introduces exercise as follows:

"It is difficult to discuss our sexuality without spending some time considering, 'Well, what's next...what can I expect, what do I want in my future relationships?' Let's brainstorm together what our fears are regarding a new love relationship."

Facilitator records responses on newsprint.

Process: - Note similarities and differences.

- Is it rational (healthy) to have fears?

2. Facilitator now asks group, "Looking at all the fears we have regarding new relationships, why do we even consider the possibility?"

   Facilitator records responses.

   Process:
   - Is what we're looking for in relationships realistic or attainable?
   - Can we get any of it without a regular or committed partner?
   - How can we move beyond the fears?

II. Values Clarification - 35 minutes

Objectives:

- To identify our values and priorities
- To examine if how we spend our time reflects those things we value

A. Lecturette: Taking Charge - 5 minutes

Facilitator introduces the topic as follows:

"A common fear for many women in transition is that if they become involved again, they will lose control over their lives...again. It is hardly news to anyone that many women sacrifice a great deal for their husbands and families. For example, in the past it was assumed that a woman would give up her job if her husband's work required a move to a new city. Women were taught to be flexible, to give in to men. Some of us have given up friends because our husbands didn't like them. Some of us have given up activities that didn't interest our husbands. And then there are some of us who have been so flexible and given up so much that we can hardly remember what it was we liked or cared about to begin with! In planning our future (whether we remain single or are involved with someone else), an important first step is to identify what we as individuals care about; what we value. We can then plan our lives in such a way that what we value is included."

B. Brainstorm and Discussion: Who Am I? - 30 minutes

1. Facilitator asks group to write ten words or phrases that describe how each woman sees herself. These phrases can describe roles (mother, friend, salesperson, etc.), activities she enjoys (jogger, reader, dancer), or characteristics (funny, cheerful, serious). Instruct women to number the phrases from one to ten, with one being most important and ten being least important.

2. Discussion

   a. Are there any parts of your list you'd like to share with the group?

   b. How did it feel to have to "rate" the different parts of you?

   c. Consider how your days are spent.

      - Do you make time for all the parts of you?

      - What parts get left out? Why?

III. Problem Solving - 30 minutes

Objectives:

- To identify areas where we wish to change

- To learn problem-solving skills

A. Group Discussion: Force Field Analysis - 30 minutes

Facilitator explains to group members that problem-solving is a method they can use to make changes in their lives. Facilitator asks women to think about how they would like to change their use of time; bearing in mind the ratings they assigned to different activities during the "Who Am I?" exercise. Facilitator distributes the "Force Field Analysis" hand-out, and using a

volunteer's desired "change," has the group complete a Force Field Analysis on newsprint. If there is extra time, other members' problems can be worked on in the group. (A group member or the facilitator can facilitate the "Analysis.")

FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS

The Problem

Goal

FORCES

that hinder	that help
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Tasks (Be specific--who, what, where, when?)

_____

_____

Evaluation

IV. Closing Evaluation - 5 minutes

Facilitator distributes "homework" assignment:

Homework

You are 65 years old. You have been asked to write a brief autobiography that will appear in Who's Who Among American Women. Create an autobiography that reflects the kinds of things that you hope to accomplish in your life.

Bring your autobiography to the next meeting.

Hand-out

FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS

The Problem

Goal

FORCES

that hinder	that help
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Tasks (Be specific--who, what, where, when?)

_____

_____

_____

Evaluation

Hand-out

Homework

You are 65 years old. You have been asked to write a brief autobiography that will appear in Who's Who Among American Women. Create an autobiography that reflects the kinds of things that you hope to accomplish in your life.

Bring your autobiography to the next meeting.

SESSION VIII

ENDINGS...BEGINNINGS

Overview

I. Planning for the Future - 50 minutes

A. Go-round: Autobiographies

B. Lecturette and Dyad: Goal-Setting

II. Endings - 40 minutes

A. Group Discussion: Unfinished Business

B. Group Discussion: Growth and Learning

C. Group Discussion: Endings

III. Strength Bombardment - 30 minutes

A. Go-round: Valentines

B. Circle Hug

SESSION VIII

Goals

1. To model and practice active planning and choice regarding the future

2. To view endings as times of loss and times to appreciate gains

3. To encourage women to continue to seek the support of other women

Materials Needed

Paper, pen, hand-outs: Goal Sheet and Guide for Leaderless Groups

Note to facilitator: If your group expresses an interest in continuing as a "leaderless group," schedule 15-20 minutes for discussion and planning. Facilitator should distribute Guide for Leaderless Groups and leave the room during the group's discussion. Facilitator should return following the discussion and ask women how their planning went. Help them to identify the problems and strengths of their planning process.

I. Planning for the Future - 50 minutes

Objectives:

- To share our fantasies of our futures as a first step in planning

- To learn goal-setting as a method of taking charge of our lives (rather than leaving the future to "chance" or "fate")

A. Go-round: Autobiographies - 20 minutes

1. Facilitator asks women to share their autobiographies with the group.

2. Process:
   - How did you feel writing your autobiography?
   - What did you learn about yourself?
   - How did it feel to read your autobiography to the group?

SESSION VIII

B. Goal Setting - 30 minutes

1. Lecturette and Discussion: Goal Setting

"Fantasy exercises like the one we've just completed are not only fun--they are also a way to begin to think about what direction we would like our lives to take. In years gone by, women had very little (if any) control over their lives. Choices were limited to begin with, and often the decisions were made by someone other than the woman herself--her parents, husband, even her adult sons! Although there are still limitations, today we have more choices open to us. We no longer need to leave decisions regarding our future in the hands of others or in the hands of fate or chance. We can begin to plan concretely and clearly for the coming years. One way of doing this is goal-setting."

Facilitator distributes goal-setting sheets to group and asks women, "What is a good goal?" (e.g. clear, concrete, realistic and specific as to who it involves, what changes need to occur, how the changes will happen, when and how you will know you've reached your goal, etc.)

2. Dyad: Setting Goals

Facilitator instructs women to complete as much of the goal-setting sheet as they can in ten minutes. (The rest should be done at home.) Then have women form dyads to share their goals. Ask women to carefully evaluate their partners' goals. Are they clear and concrete? Are they specific as to what must be done? Are they realistic? Do they reflect the partner's fantasy/autobiography?

II. Endings - 40 minutes

Objectives:

- To provide an opportunity for bringing up any unfinished business
- To identify the ways we have changed and grown
- To demystify endings

SESSION VIII

A. Group Discussion: Unfinished Business

Facilitator asks group if there is any "unfinished business"--any question or issue that remains unanswered or unresolved. What will group members do to resolve these issues for themselves?

B. Group Discussion: Growth and Learning

1. What have been the most significant experiences of the group for you?

2. What new skills have you learned?

3. What changes in your life have you made as a result of this group?

C. Group Discussion: Endings

1. How do you feel about the group ending?

2. How do you usually deal with endings?

3. Is this ending different? Similar?

III. Strength Bombardment - 30 minutes

Objectives:

- To reinforce the strengths and positive qualities of each woman

- To improve self-esteem

A. Valentines

1. Facilitator gives each woman enough sheets of paper so that she can write a Valentine to each group member. Instruct women to write down the things they like about each woman. Members then deliver their Valentines to the appropriate woman.

2. In a Go-round have each woman read the Valentines she has received.

B. Circle Hug

End the group with a circle hug.

Hand-Out

GOAL SHEET

	GOAL	PLAN	RESULT
PERSONAL:			
PROFESSIONAL:			
LONG RANGE:			

Hand-out

GUIDE FOR LEADERLESS GROUPS

During the time that your Separation & Divorce Group has been meeting, you've probably grown used to many things about the way the group functions. Your facilitator(s) have taken responsibility for organizing where and when the group meets, and have planned which activities take place at each session. For your group to continue meeting without "leaders" there are several things which need to happen. Basically, you and the rest of the members have to start taking responsibility for the group.

Where and When

Where will your group meet? Some groups choose to meet at a member's home which is centrally located; other groups decide to take turns meeting at each member's home. It is important to schedule meetings in places where you feel comfortable. Restaurants or other public places may not give you the privacy you need to share and work together as a group.

How often your group meets depends on many factors including your group members' time availability as well as the level of commitment your group is ready to make. Groups usually find it easiest when there is an identified regular meeting time--for example, every Thursay night or every other Thursday night, or the first Monday of each month. Groups should periodically check-in to see if the timing and frequency of meetings is still satisfactory to the group.

What and How

What are the main goals and objectives of your group? How will the group run or organize itself? These are important questions that your group should begin considering. There are many ways to organize a group. We recommend that you find some form of structure that the group is comfortable with. Some suggestions are:

1. Rotate facilitating, with one or two women taking responsibility for keeping track of time, helping the group stay on the topic, etc.

   -or-

   Make a commitment that everyone in the group will take equal responsibility for facilitating tasks.

2. Find a general format that is comfortable. Some suggested formats are:

   A. No structure

   B. Combination of free time and topics. At the beginning of each meeting members "sign up" for time if they have a concern or issue they wish to share. The remaining group time is spent discussing a topic.

   C. Topic-oriented. Each session is devoted to the discussion of a specific topic.

3. Create a list of topics that you are interested in discussing. Possible topics might include dating, ex-husbands, job concerns, motherhood, mothers, sex, friendship, body image, clothing and image, women and power, money, monogamy, etc.

4. Establish group ground rules. In the Separation & Divorce group these rules were no interrupting, no advice giving, and using "I" statements (that is, speaking for yourself). Your group should also consider how you wish to handle confidentiality, group attendance, new members, etc.

5. Leave time to discuss periodically how you are feeling about the group. Are you comfortable and satisfied with how things are going? Are there changes you feel should be made?

A group needs people to take responsibility in order for it to function smoothly. Committing your time and energy to a "leaderless group" will bring you an exciting opportunity for support, growth, learning, and sisterhood.

PART 3: MORE INFORMATION

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR FACILITATORS

ASSERTIVENESS

The Counseling Psychologist (Assertion training issue), 1975, 5.

The entire issue of this journal is devoted to exploring various aspects of assertiveness training. Articles include considerations of theory, principles of practice, sexuality assertion training, and assessment procedures. Recommended for practitioners who wish to broaden their knowledge and understanding of assertiveness training.

Jakubowski, P., and Lange, A. Responsible assertive behavior. Illinois: Research Press Co., 1977.

This book is written by two counseling psychologists with a great deal of experience in assertiveness training. The authors offer a thorough overview of the theory and practice of assertiveness and provide cognitive/behavioral procedures for trainers leading assertiveness groups.

Phelps, S., and Austin, N. The assertive woman. California: Impact Press, 1975.

Ms. Phelps and Ms. Austin have written a book that is helpful to both practitioners and women in general. The authors provide the reader with clear and concrete information and exercises. Written from a feminist perspective, the book also addresses such issues as assertive sexuality, anger and androgyny.

Smith, M. When I say no I feel guilty. New York: Dial Press, 1975.

This is a popular self-help manual that thousands have used in order to learn more assertive communication.

BATTERED WOMEN

Fleming, J. Stopping wife abuse: A guide to the emotional, psychological, and legal implications for the abused woman and those helping her. New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1979.

This book is addressed to victims of battering and to those who seek to help them. Ms. Fleming discusses the legal, philosophical, and counseling issues that arise when battered women attempt to change or leave abusive situations. This is a fine resource book for counselors.

Martin, D. Battered wives. California: Glide Publications, 1975.

An excellent introduction for those who want to know more about wife abuse. Ms. Martin examines the causes of, reactions to, and remedies for the abuse of women. She argues effectively that wife battering is deeply rooted in historical attitudes towards women, marriage, and the economic, legal, and social organization of our society.

Roy, M. (Ed.). Battered women: A psychosociological study of domestic violence. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1977.

Ms. Roy and over fourteen contributors offer an in-depth look at the social, legal, historical, and clinical factors involved in wife abuse. Of special interest and value is Murray Strauss' "A sociological perspective on the prevention and treatment of wifebeating."

Walker, L. The battered woman. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, Inc., 1979.

In this book Ms. Walker explores the psychology of battering. Included in the book are sections on learned helplessness, the psychology of the battered woman, coercive techniques in abusive relationships and "the way out." Interwoven throughout the book are the true life stories of battered women with whom Ms. Walker has worked.

BODY WORK

Rush, A.K. Getting clear: Body work for women. California: The Bookworks, 1973.

An excellent book for group members and facilitators who wish to go beyond the introduction to bodywork offered in Session IV. Ms. Rush uses the techniques of movement, body massage, yoga, and Structural Integration to help women gain greater internal support. Getting Clear contains instructions for over 250 body work exercises.

CHILDREN OF DIVORCE

Galper, M. Co-parenting: Sharing your children equally. Philadelphia: Running Press, 1978.

Ms. Galper offers readers her personal and professional experiences with co-parenting. This book deals with the main considerations involved in successfully managing co-parenting from the perspective of one who sees co-parenting as a positive alternative to more traditional child custody arrangements. This is a good resource for group members contemplating some form of joint custody.

Gardner, R. The parents book about divorce. New York: Bantam Books, 1979.

Written by a child psychiatrist, this is a comprehensive book for divorcing parents who wish to negotiate the difficulties of a separation in a manner that is least likely to hurt their children. A practical and informative guide, this is a valuable resource for group members with children.

Klein, C. The single parent experience. New York: Avon Publishers, 1973.

This book examines the various lifestyles single parents can pursue.

Ramos, S. The complete book of child custody. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1979.

Ms. Ramos has written a truly comprehensive examination of child custody. Included here is historical information, an

exploration of the many types of custody that exist, and a guide on how to choose the type of custody that is best for you and your children. Clear and well-written, this is an excellent resource for group members who want to know more about child custody.

CRISIS INTERVENTION

Colgrove, M., Bloomfield, H., and McWilliams, P. How to survive the loss of love. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1976.

A simple but beautifully written self-help manual that deals with coping with loss. The authors are particularly effective in portraying the process of loss and are persuasive in reassuring readers that such reactions as anger, guilt and depression are normal responses to a loss of love. How to Survive as been a dear friend to many a woman in transition.

Getz, W., et al. Fundamentals of crisis counseling. Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1974.

This is a basic text which offers the fundamentals of crisis theory and practice for the counselor in training and the practitioner. While the authors primarily address crisis counseling with individuals, the information provided is quite applicable to group work.

Pasework, A., and Albers, D. Crisis intervention: Theory in search of a program. Social Work, 1972, 17, 70-77.

Pasework and Albers present a fine and concise introduction to crisis intervention theory and practice. Topics covered include roots of crisis theory, assumptions of crisis intervention, types of crisis, stages of crisis and implications for practice--all in less than eight pages!

Wiseman, R. Crisis theory and the process of divorce. Social Work, 1967, 12, 543-548.

Applying the concepts of crisis theory to the process of divorce, Ms. Wiseman presents divorce as a form of emotional

crisis with unique characteristics and opportunities for growth. The author's delineation of the five stages in the process of divorce is useful to practitioners as well as to women in transition. Case illustrations are included.

DEPRESSION

Bardwick, J.M. (Ed.). Psychology of women: A study of bio-cultural conflicts. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.

This is an academic (and somewhat heavy) collection of theory and research papers from the professional literature of psychology, sociology, anthropology, obstetrics, and psychosomatics. Sections cover the development of sex differences, socialization, the traditional roles, and the criteria for mental health.

DeRosis, H., and Pellegrino, V.Y. The book of hope: How women can overcome depression. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1976.

Written from a feminist perspective, this self-help book offers women a practical guide to relieving and managing depression. The authors assert that depression has its roots in the way our culture looks at women and in the roles women play in our society. Many women have found The Book of Hope reassuring and helpful.

DIVORCE

Gettlemen, S., and Markowitz, J. The courage to divorce. New York: Balantine Books, 1974.

The authors present a positive view of divorce which is supported by their fine analysis of the biases and prejudices that have been associated with divorce (e.g. "the myth of the damaged child"). Also included is a look at the religious, historical, and legal aspects of divorce. This book is a fine resource for facilitators and women in transition - enlightening and supportive.

Divorce, continued

Kessler, Sheila. The American way of divorce. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1975.

This book offers the reader a nice overview of the divorce experience. Among the issues examined in this book are the emotional aspects of divorce, facts and myths regarding divorce, cross-cultural comparisons, and the need for divorce reform.

Krantzler, M. Creative divorce. New York: M. Evans & Co., 1974.

Krantzler deals with the transition from marriage to single life. Rather than seeing divorce as punishment, Krantzler presents divorce as a solution which brings with it opportunities for self-renewal and discovery. Recommended for facilitators and group members.

Weiss, R. Marital separation. New York: Basic Books, 1976

A well-respected book which addresses such issues as the emotional impact of divorce; separation and identity change; reactions of friends, family, and children; and starting over. Of interest to women in transition and group facilitators.

Women in Transition. Women in transition: A feminist handbook on separation and divorce. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975.

This is a comprehensive reference book for women in marital transition. Included here are sections on emotional supports, children in transition, legal information, divorce, child custody, financial resources, housing and many others. Poetry, photography, and women's personal experiences are woven throughout this informative book.

FEMINIST THERAPY

Mander, A.V., and Rusk, A.K. Feminism as therapy. New York: Random House, 1974.

This book offers two women's very personal look at feminism and feminist therapy. The authors also include an introduction to and consideration of body work.

Miller, J. Toward a new psychology of women. Boston: Beacon Press, 1976.

This important book presents a new framework for understanding the psychology of women. Dr. Miller explores the forces acting upon women and highlights the critical points necessary for change and advancement. An interesting aspect of Dr. Miller's analysis is her redefinition of women's "weaknesses" as strengths.

Radov, C.G., Masnick, B.R., and Hauser, B.B. Issues in feminist therapy: The work of a women's study group. Social Work, 1977, 22, 507-509.

This article answers the question, what makes feminist therapy different from good therapy? The authors present five components that differentiate feminist therapy from traditional therapy. Case studies are used to illustrate good therapy, bad therapy, and feminist therapy.

Rawlings, E.I. and Carter, D.K. (Eds.). Psychotherapy for women: Treatment toward equality. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1977.

A big, worthwhile book that offers guidelines to psychotherapeutic treatment from a feminist perspective. Chapters on "Feminist and Non-Sexist Psychotherapy" and "Self-Assertion Training Procedures for Women" will be of particular interest to group facilitators.

Williams, E.F. Notes of a feminist therapist. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976.

A lively and readable book that enables readers to see feminist therapy in action. Ms. Williams illustrates how her women clients grapple with such problems as love, sex, motherhood, and work, and how she helps them work towards change and increased fulfillment. The book also includes a fine chapter on feminist therapy.

GROUP PROCESS AND GROUP WORK

Allen, P. Free space: A perspective on the small group in women's liberation. New York: Times Change Press, 1970.

An outgrowth of Ms. Allen's participation in a consciousness raising group in the sixties, this book presents the uses and benefits of small groups for women. This is a provocative look at the nature of the small group and its place in the women's movement - a nice resource for an ambitious leaderless group.

Johnson, D.W., and Johnson, F.P. Joining together: Group theory and group skills. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.

Corey, C. and Corey, M.S. Groups: Process and practice. California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., 1977.

Bradford, L.P. (Ed.). Group development. Virginia: Learning Resources Corp., 1974.

Shulman, L. The skills of helping individuals and groups. Illinois: F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1980.

These are four basic group work texts that are useful to the practitioner who wishes to expand her knowledge and understanding of fundamental group issues. All these books are clear and straightforward and cover such topics as group dynamics, group process, group roles, and professional issues.

MINORITY WOMEN

Cade, T. The Black woman. New York: The American Library, 1970.

An anthology of poems, stories, and essays written by Black women. This is an honest, angry appraisal of the Black woman's situation in contemporary America.

Ladner, J. Tomorrow's tomorrow. New York: Anchor Books, 1972.

Ms. Ladner presents the results of a research study on the meaning of approaching womanhood for poor Black girls in the city. Tomorrow's Tomorrow offers a unique perspective on the intricate elements that characterize the daily lives of many Black women.

Solomon, B. Black empowerment: Social work in oppressed communities. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.

Ms. Solomon considers such topics as power and powerlessness, strategies of empowerment, and the role of the practitioner. A useful and practical book that helps sensitize the practitioner to many of the critical issues in dealing with minority women.

Staples, R. The Black woman in America: Sex, marriage, and the family. Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1973.

This is a comprehensive look at the Black woman by a noted sociologist. Mr. Staples traces the historical roles of Black women and explores the myths and realities of Black women's sexuality and motherhood. This book includes a thought-provoking discussion of the oppression and socialization of Black and White women.

SEX ROLE SOCIALIZATION

Carney, C.G. and McMahon, S.L. (Eds.). Exploring contemporary male/female roles: A facilitator's guide. California: University Associates, 1977.

This book brings together a fine collection of structured activities for groups exploring the impact and meaning of sex-role socialization. In addition, the authors offer a reading section for facilitators which includes well-chosen articles on sexism, sex-role socialization, and androgyny.

Garskof, M.D. (Ed.). Roles women play: Readings towards women's liberation. California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., 1971.

Garskof looks at the causes of psychological differences between men and women. A theme throughout the book is the interrelationship of economic and social factors in the evolution of the psychology of women. Contributors include Caroline Bird, Sandra and Daryl Bem, and Alice Rossi.

Maccoby, E., and Jacklin, C. The psychology of sex differences. California: Stanford University Press, 1974.

Maccoby and Jacklin offer a comprehensive review of recent research in the psychology of sex differences. This is a truly in-depth assessment of the state of current research on women. Also included is a lengthy (over 200 pages long) annotated bibliography.

SEXUALITY

Barbach, L. For yourself: The fulfillment of female sexuality. New York: New American Library, 1975.

Ms. Barbach presents a practical program for women who wish to achieve greater sexual satisfaction. (This program has proven to be quite successful for pre-orgasmic women.) Of interest to all are Ms. Barbach's thoughtful consideraton of such issues as sex and orgasm, sources of sexual confusion, psychological aspects of reaching orgasm, rethinking sexual goals and one's responsibility to one's body. Recommended for both facilitators and group members.

The Boston Women's Health Collective. Our bodies, ourselves: A book by and for women. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1976.

This is an invaluable source book for facilitators and group members. Major women's health issues are addressed in a manner that is both informative and empowering. The book includes sections on contraception, pregnancy, abortion, childbirth, sexuality, menopause, lesbianism, exercise, and diet.

Hite, S. The Hite report. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1976.

In the Hite report 3,000 women, aged 14 to 78, describe their sexuality in their own words. This book gives women a great deal of support for assertive sexuality and is appropriate for facilitators and women in transition.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Client Information Form

NAME _____ PHONE (HOME) _____

ADDRESS _____ (WORK) _____

HOUSING

1. Is this a permanent address?
   ____yes ____no (what is?)

2. Housing concerns:
   ____yes (explain) ____no

CHILDREN

3. Do you have any children?
   ____yes (how many, ages, sex) ____no

4. Are your children living with you?
   ____yes ____no (where are they? Are you in agreement with this?)

5. Do you have any concerns about your children?
   ____yes (explain) ____no

EMPLOYMENT

6. Are you presently employed?
   ____yes (Occupation _____)

   ____no

7. If no, do you wish to be?
   ____yes (what would you desire?) ____no

8. Is your spouse employed?
   ____yes (Occupation _____)

   ____no

9. Does outside employment present any child care problems?
   ____yes (explain) ____no

10. Financial Concerns:
    ____yes (explain) ____no

RELATIONSHIP

11. Tell me about your relationship. Are you presently:

    ____separated (how long _____)
    ____divorced (how long _____)
    ____living with partner/spouse (how long _____)

12. If separated, divorced, or in the process, how long were you married or living together?
    ____ (number of years)

13. First Marriage? ____yes ___no (which one?_____)

14. If separated, is this the first time?
____yes ____no (Dates of separation(s):

15. Was separation agreement: ____mutual, ____yours,
____your partner's?

16. Tell me about your spouse.

17. What are your feelings about the relationship?
(Quote client as directly as possible)

18. Was physical abuse ever involved?

19. What about mental abuse? ____ Sexual abuse? ____

SERVICES

20. Do you have a lawyer?
____yes (Name _____)

____no

21. Do you need legal services?
____yes ____no Referral _____

22. If you have a lawyer, are you satisfied with your
services? ____yes ____no (explain)

23. Have you ever been or are you now in counseling?
____yes ____no

Individual____ Group____ Family____ Couple____

Past Therapy

Name of Counselor	Where	When	How Long	What were your reactions?

If in therapy now, does therapist know you are joining the Separation & Divorce Group?

24. Have you ever, or are you now taking medication for nerves or depression? Any illegal drugs?
____yes (what? _____

amount and frequency _____)

____no presently? _____ past? _____

Additional comments:

25. What do you hope to get from the Separation & Divorce Group?

26. Do you have any concerns about the group?
____yes (explain) ____no

GROUP PROCESS FORM

Session #_____ Date_____

Facilitator(s)_____

Number of Group Members Present _____

Names of participants absent:

Outline the structure of the session, including the topic, exercise, and leader.

1. What are your general perceptions regarding group process? (e.g. sluggish, dynamic, slow to start, stimulating, etc.)

2. What signs of feelings did you observe in group members?

____anger	____frustration	____enthusiasm
____boredom	____guilt	____fear
____competitiveness	____joy	____depression
____confidence	____hurt/pain	____warmth/ affection

3. Were there members who showed signs of being upset or who had difficulty participating? If yes, who? How was this handled by the group and the facilitator(s)?

4. Was there a situation in this session the facilitator(s) found hard to handle?

5. Was there an intervention that the facilitator(s) made that she/they feel good about?

6. What were the most effective and least effective group activities during this session?

7. What was the general evaluation of this meeting by the group members?

EVALUATION OF
THE SEPARATION & DIVORCE GROUP

NAME _____ DATE _____

The questions below are about your experience with the Separation & Divorce Group. Your answers help us improve our services to the women who come after you. Please feel free to answer them in as much detail as you can.

1. What did you like most about your support group?

2. What did you like least about your support group?

3. Please comment on your expectations of the support group experience and how they have or have not been met.

4. What have you learned from being in the group?

5. Has your participation in this group caused you to change in any way (attitudes, feelings, behavior)?
   Yes____ No____ If yes, please comment.

6. Please comment on the leadership, including ways the facilitator(s) was/were helpful and ways she/they could have been more helpful.

7. Please suggest ways we, as an organization, could improve our services to women.

8. Any additional comments.